The social construction of dyslexia in the UK media: school as a site of failure

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By Caroline Simblett

Abstract

Despite the capacious amount of research into dyslexia, there has been very little research carried out which investigates how the media construct dyslexia. Print media are in a powerful position in society to construct a concept like dyslexia, they are an example of what Foucault (1977b) termed a ‘technology of power’. They have the power to create their own knowledge and truth about a topic. This thesis is concerned with exploring how the media in the UK (both mainstream and specialist media targeted at educational professionals) construct dyslexia as a topic as well as how they construct the dyslexic subject particularly within schools and the UK education system.

This study used a mixed methods approach combining corpus linguistics with a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. The data collected for this research was compiled into two corpora, which have been designed and built especially for this study. The corpora contain a total of 8283 news items across 43 years.

Discourse in media portray school and the education system as sites of failure for children with dyslexia. Continuous reports of schools being sued, children leaving school without qualifications and reports of the failure of teachers to identify dyslexia at a young age creates a discursive formation of failure. State schools were framed as not doing enough to help children with dyslexia whereas private schools were framed as saviours.

The research also revealed that the continued use of positive discourse in mainstream media meant that dyslexia was constructed as gift and associated with creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Constant reference to gifted celebrities was used to promote this view. Although discourse was investigated over time, it was found that no real change was identified in the ways in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject were constructed across the corpora.

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List of abbreviations

ADHD	Attention Deficit Disorder
BDA	British Dyslexia Association
CL	Corpus Linguistics
FDA	Foucauldian Discourse Analysis
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
IPSO	Independent Press Standards Organisation
KWIC	Keyword in context
LEA	Local Education Authority
LL	Log Likelihood
NRS	National Readership Survey
NSMC	Non-specialist media corpus
p-value	Probability value
PCC	Press Complaints Commission
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
SMC	Specialist media corpus
TES	Times Education Supplement
THE	Times Higher Educational Supplement

Statement of copyright

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Glossary of terms

Collocation

Collocation is the phenomenon that certain words are more likely to occur alongside other words in particular contexts (Baker & Hardie, 2006). Collocation analysis tests the significance of the cooccurrence frequency of a **node word** and the surrounding words in a corpus.

Concordance

Also referred to as key word in context (KWIC). A concordance analysis provides a list of all the occurrences of a search term within a corpus within its context.

Corpus

‘A body of written or spoken material upon which a linguistic analysis is based’ (OED, 2017, p. n.p).

Discourse

Discourse describes ideas and statements which allow us to make sense of things/knowledge/truth. It is a social process which produces meaning.

Dyslexia

‘Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities’ (Rose, 2009, p. 29).

Dispersion

Dispersion is a measure that investigates the degree to which a word is distributed throughout a corpus, telling the researcher how evenly a word is distributed (Gries, 2019).

Frequency

Frequency is the most basic statistical measure in corpus linguistics and shows how prevalent a searched word is in a corpus (Gries, 2010, p. 270).

Keyword/keyness

Keyness is a methodology which compares frequencies of key words in one list with another and gives a measure of saliency (Baker, 2006b).

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is the idea that market principles have been introduced into education through accountability and quality assurance. Foucault (2004a) argues that this is a mode of self-government which shapes the subjectivity of students using assessment. Foucault (2004a) also argues that neoliberalism can be seen as a specific mode of government which is rooted in economic discourses of competition. In a neoliberal education system success and failure is seen to be an individual problem.

Normalised frequency

When comparing two corpora of different sizes a normalised frequency is calculated so that the two corpora can be compared. This calculation will be computed using the following formula from McEnery and Hardie (2011, p. 49):

$$nf = \frac{no.\,of\ examples\ of\ the\ word\ in\ the\ whole\ corpus}{size\ of\ the\ corpus}\ x\ base\ of\ normalisation$$

The base of normalisation will be 100,000 as the specialist corpus contains less than 1 million words. The raw figures as well as the normalised figures will be reported throughout this thesis.

Non-Specialist Media

UK national press whose targeted audience is the general public.

Normalisation

A discursive dividing practice which divides the ‘normal’ from the ‘deviant’.

Power

Foucauldian power is not seen as a thing which is possessed by an individual but rather a complex set of relations between groups of people in society. Power is constantly changing and is not always negative.

Reference Corpus

A reference corpus is usually much larger and its aim is to represent the general nature of the language being studied and for English this is often the British National Corpus (BNC) or Brown Corpus (Baker & Hardie, 2006, p. 138). A reference corpus is used to compare word frequencies between corpora.

Social Construction

Meanings are not fixed or inevitable but are a 'product of historical events, social forces, and ideology' (Hacking (1999, p. 2).

Specialist Media

Educational media whose targeted audience is educational professionals.

Subjectivity

How subjects are created and subjected to discourse. It is ‘the process of becoming a subject within a discursive power/knowledge production’ (Lehn-Christiansen, 2011, p. 312)

1. Introduction

1.1 The research problem and the aims of this research

Dyslexia is a contested subject within the fields of education, medicine, and psychology because it has no clear diagnostic criteria. Indeed, there has been a lot of theoretical debate about the causes, identification as well as the conceptualisation of what dyslexia is within academic research. Stanovich (1994, p. 579) argues that the concept of dyslexia is tied up with 'unverified theories about causation' and that it carries so many connotations and assumptions that many researchers and practitioners avoid the term. This has led to what is now known as the 'dyslexia debate' which questions the usefulness of the term dyslexia and argues that there is little to distinguish a poor reader from a person diagnosed with dyslexia (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014; Elliott & Nicolson, 2016; Stanovich, 1994). There is no current agreed upon definition of dyslexia across professional and academic fields. This raises the following question: if professionals and scholars do not have a clear understanding of what dyslexia is (or is not) how does this impact on how media portray and construct the concept of dyslexia to the public? (The issues surrounding the concept of dyslexia will be discussed further in chapter two). This study aims to explore this topic. Specifically, it aims to investigate how the concept of dyslexia is created by looking at popular media in the UK (non-specialist) as well as media targeted at teaching professionals (specialist) and highlight the importance of how media conceptualise dyslexia. I also wish to examine how the identity of a dyslexic subject is created drawing on the work of Foucault and his theory of subjectification. Subjectification is 'the process of becoming a subject within a discursive power/knowledge production' (Lehn-Christiansen, 2011, p. 312). Therefore, in the context my research questions (outlined below), I will be investigating how a person with dyslexia becomes a dyslexic subject within media's discursive practice.

Not having a clear definition of dyslexia or clear diagnostic criteria to identify dyslexia makes estimates of prevalence challenging. Overall estimates of

dyslexia range between 3% and 7% when using a criterion of 1.5 standard deviations below the average mean on measures of reading (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2019; Peterson & Pennington, 2012; Snowling & Melby-Lervåg, 2016). However, a search for the prevalence of dyslexia can range anywhere from 5 to 20% (Wagner et al., 2020). In Britain, the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) estimates that 10% of the British population have dyslexia, 4% of which have severe dyslexia (Malpas, 2012). These figures need to be treated with caution as charities often inflate their figures of incidence as they have a vested interest and need people to support their cause. Within the education system, in the UK, dyslexia is categorised as a Specific Learning Difficulty with 15.1% of children and young people who currently receive Special Educational Needs support in schools and 3.7% of children and young people with a statement or an Education Health Care Plan are categorised as having a Specific Learning Difficulty (DfE, 27 July 2017). Unfortunately, there is no current breakdown of how many of these children and young people have a diagnosis of dyslexia and how many of them have a diagnosis of a different Specific learning Difficulty (SpLD) such as dyscalculia or dyspraxia. However, these figures give an indication of the predominance of dyslexia in today's literate society and provide an estimate of how many people are affected by dyslexia on a daily basis. One of the reasons why we do not have accurate figures of incidence for dyslexia is due to the uncertainty around what dyslexia is and how to identify and treat it.

Dyslexia continues to be the subject of much research in the fields of education, psychology and medicine in the UK and internationally. The context of this thesis is UK newspapers. Print media has been chosen as a source for investigation because it is 'paramount for awareness-raising, attitude formation, circulation of ideas, personal expression, social identity, and cultural currency' and thus is key to understanding disability (Ellis & Goggin, 2015, p. 6). Furthermore, media is arguably one of the most far-reaching and influential systems for the production and dissemination of knowledge in Western society; it wields enormous power in influencing public opinion' (Qazi & Shah, 2017, p. 2). Additionally, most UK press have a very

political agenda with certain newspapers being affiliated with particular political parties (see appendix 1). Therefore, by investigating the UK press, the dominant societal order can be examined. Despite the decline in overall circulation of print media due to the upsurge of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (this is discussed further in chapter 3) UK media still has power and influence. Indeed, in Britain 50.1 million people still access newsbrands across print media and digital platforms (PAMCo, 2020).

Media has the power to portray particular groups and individuals in certain ways and in doing so has the potential to influence social and personal identities, over and underrepresent certain social groups as well as contribute to widely held stereotypes (M. Johnson, Pabu, & Huey, 2003). One of the stereotypes portrayed often in the media, relating to dyslexia specifically, is that of the 'genius dyslexic' which is discussed in chapter 3. Consequently, in terms of education, how media targeted at professionals in the field of education construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject can impact upon professional practice. Additionally, educational professionals are also likely to consume mainstream media, thus they can be influenced by both media types. For instance, if a teacher ascribes to the commonly portrayed image of the dyslexic genius in the media, they may associate dyslexia only with children of above or high intelligence. This could result in a child with a lower IQ not being diagnosed at an early stage in their education which can have a negative impact on the child's attainment as well as their emotional wellbeing (Colenbrander, Ricketts, & Breadmore, 2018). Snowling (2013, p. 12) argues that children with dyslexia need to be identified early and the appropriate interventions put in place before a sense of failure for the child sets in.

Professionals in the field of dyslexia, including teachers, may have misconceptions about dyslexia. For example, Paradice (2001), Furnham (2013) Worthy, Lammert, Long, Salmerón, and Godfrey (2018) all found evidence of the belief amongst professionals that high intelligence was linked with dyslexia i.e. they all prescribed to the idea of the 'dyslexic genius'

portrayed in media (see chapter 4). Other misconceptions portrayed by media may also be found to have a negative impact on the professional practice of professionals dealing with dyslexic children and adults. As a result, I would argue that how media define and construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject is an important research area, and one that has been understudied.

1.2 Research questions

This study aimed to explore the ways in which dyslexia is socially constructed in the UK media. Data from UK newspapers was compared with data from educational media in order to investigate if there are any differences in the ways in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject has been constructed in these two types of media. Temporal changes within the two media types will also be investigated. Within this context, this study poses the following research questions:

1. How is the concept of dyslexia discursively constructed in specialist and non-specialist media discourse in the UK?

    a. How are dyslexic subjects discursively constructed in UK print media?

    b. To what extent do the discourses of dyslexia in UK specialist and non-specialist media change over time?

1.3 An outline of the methodological approach

It was decided at the outset that the most appropriate methodology to address the research questions in this study is a corpus linguistics approach. Corpus Linguistics (CL) is a methodology which concerns the analysis of language in use; it is the 'study of language based on examples of "real life"

language use' (McEnery & Wilson, 1996, p. 1). This methodological approach uses a corpus (plural corpora) which is a collection of texts stored in an electronic database (Baker, Hardie, & McEnery, 2006). CL can be used to analyse patterns of discourse over a large dataset through the use of wordlists, concordances and keyword searches. Tognini-Bonelli (2001, p. 4) argues that 'frequency of occurrence is indicative of frequency of use and this gives a good basis for evaluating the profile of a specific word, structure or expression in relation to a norm.' Therefore, the use of CL in this study will offer insight into what words and meanings are most often associated with dyslexia in both specialist and non-specialist media in the UK. Furthermore, this approach allows the analysis of a large dataset which can be compared overtime and can allow for complex statistical analysis which can reveal linguistic patterns and information regarding the frequencies of words (Baker, 2006a). Since this research is investigating how dyslexic subjects are discursively constructed, common words associated with dyslexia will be paramount in finding out what discourse is used to construct the dyslexic subject especially when considering that the words authors use are seldomly random (Archer, 2009). Therefore, the frequencies of words within the corpora will play a central part in this research.

Although, CL employs quantitative methods of analysis and is an empirical approach to research because the starting point for research is the data itself (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001) it also has a qualitative element. This is primarily seen during the concordance element of CL. Concordance is a list of all of the occurrences of a particular search term (or node) within a corpus presented in the context in which they occur (Baker et al., 2006). Concordance data allows the researcher to explore in detail the context of the individual cases within the corpora. Within this study, concordance data was used to investigate themes which emerged in the earlier stages of data analysis (such as during the frequency word analysis stage). For example, the verb 'was' appeared frequently across the corpora, so the concordance analysis was used to reveal the fact that dyslexia is being constructed as a childhood condition in both specialist and non-specialist media (see section

0). Examples were drawn from the newspaper articles to illustrate the findings.

For this research, two specialised corpora (one for specialist media, referred to as the SMC throughout this thesis, and one for non-specialist media, referred to as the NSMC throughout this thesis) have been created for this study consisting of newspaper articles between 1975-2017 on the topic of dyslexia. These corpora are classed as specialised as they have been created especially for this piece of research (Baker, 2006b). There was not a corpus that already existed which covered newspaper articles on dyslexia for this time period. Although a time-consuming process, creating your own corpora has the benefits of learning the process of how a corpus is constructed, evaluating corpus software and learning to use it effectively. It also allows the researcher to have full control over what is included and excluded within the corpus and thus improves the integrity of the data. Further information can be found within chapter five on how the data was collected and collated into the two corpora for this research.

This thesis is investigating non-specialist media but, the primary focus is on education and how this is perceived in relation to dyslexia and the dyslexic subject.

1.4 Key terms

1.4.1 Dyslexia

The term dyslexia is of central importance in this study. However, in the field of research as well as practice a universally accepted definition of dyslexia which is not ‘imprecise, amorphous, or difficult to operationalise’ (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014, p. 5) does not yet exist. The issues surrounding the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the label dyslexia in education and academic research will be discussed in detail in chapter two. However, a

concept of dyslexia needs to be operationalised for this research. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis the following definition of dyslexia will be used:

> Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities (J. Rose, 2009, p. 29).

This definition has been selected as it was coined in the 2009 government report *Identifying and teaching children and young people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties* written by Jim Rose with the aid of an expert advisory group which consisted of leading professionals in the field of dyslexia (Rose, 2009).

In the UK and the USA terms referring to disability and reading difficulties such as dyslexia are used differently across education policy as well as educational research. In the UK research setting and within the wider professional field of dyslexia the terms *dyslexia, specific learning difficulty, learning difficulty, reading disability, reading disorder* and *specific reading disabilities* are used interchangeably (Elliott & Nicolson, 2016). Indeed, the terms *learning difficulty* and *learning disability* are much broader terms in the UK. *Learning disability* is defined as:

> a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development…'Learning disability' does not include all those who have a 'learning difficulty' which is more broadly defined in education legislation (Department of Health, 2001, pp. 14-15).

In other words, in the UK the term *learning disability* does not encompass people who have dyslexia or any other specific learning difficulty. However, in the USA and Canada these terms are used in a different way. The terms *learning disabled*, *learning disability* and *specific learning disabilities* can refer to people with dyslexia but can also refer to people with intellectual

impairment and the term *mentally retarded* (which is considered to be an offensive term in the UK) can refer to people with low cognitive ability. This thesis is being carried out in the UK and will thus use UK terminology when referring to dyslexia (and thus will use the term dyslexia or SpLD) and learning disabilities. Therefore, any research which has been conducted in the USA will be highlighted and the terms which have been used within the individual studies will be defined and explained where applicable.

1.4.2 Specialist media

Specialist media will refer to educational media whose target audience is educational professionals in the UK. For this thesis, this primarily consists of publications by The Times newspaper, namely The Times Educational Supplement (TES) and The Times Higher Educational Supplement (THE) alongside the education sections of the newspapers included within this study (see appendix 1 and the methodology chapter for further information).

1.4.3 Non-specialist media

Non-specialist media will refer to the UK national press which is targeted at the general public. This thesis will draw upon data from a wide range of newspaper styles including broadsheets, tabloids, compacts and freesheet newspapers which vary from daily to Sunday publications. Appendix 1 shows the different classifications of the UK newspapers which will be used in this thesis; this includes information about the style, the frequency of publication, the political affiliation and the estimated daily readership for each newspaper used.

1.4.4 Discourse

Discourse as a concept emphasises that social processes produce meaning. Indeed, discursive practices are concerned with meaning, representation and culture (Hall, 1997). By adopting the position that discourse is a form of

social practice, I am not applying the linguistic use of the term *discourse* which has a more micro-analytic emphasis and is concerned primarily with the structure and meaning of texts (Luke, 1995; MacLure, 2003). Instead, I draw on the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault whose use of the term discourse was central to his writing. According to Foucault 'discourses are composed of signs, but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this move that renders them irreducible to the language and to speech. It is this 'move' that we must reveal and describe' (Foucault, 1972b, p. 49).

1.4.5 Subjectivity

Subjectification guided by Foucault's (1982b) theorisation will underpin this study and will be defined as 'the process of becoming a subject within a discursive power/knowledge production' (Lehn-Christiansen, 2011, p. 312). Subjectivity, according to Foucault (1982b, p. 208) has a double-meaning; a more pessimistic version of subjectivity refers to how subjects are created and subjected to discourse whereas a more optimistic version of subjectivity can refer to how actors (or creators of discourse) can create and shape discourse. This research will focus on the more pessimistic version of subjectivity by looking at how dyslexic subjects are products of discourse and how subject positions define the dyslexic subject. Therefore, in the context of my research I will be investigating how a person with dyslexia becomes a 'subject' within media's discursive practice. I will be investigating the discourse and terms of reference used to describe the dyslexic subject as well as how media position the dyslexic subject within society as a whole and within educational media discourse.

1.4.6 Normalisation

According to Foucault, normalisation 'categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches to him his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have to recognise for him'

(Foucault, 1982b, p. 214). Consequently, normalisation becomes a discursive dividing practice which divides the ‘normal’ from the ‘deviant’. In Special Education, children are labelled and thus are ‘othered’ as children who do not conform to a socially constructed idea of ‘normal’.

1.4.7 Power

For Foucault, ‘power relations permeate all levels of social existence and are therefore to be found operating at every site of social life’ (Foucault, 1980, p. 119). Furthermore, Foucault argues that there is nothing outside of power and that power relations change with circumstance and time.

This thesis draws upon Foucault’s concepts of disciplinary power and bio-power. The school can be seen as an example of disciplinary power, in the ways in which it performs roles of surveillance upon its students and also enforces and creates the norms of society. In terms of disciplinary and bio-power, the media is examined in the way it shapes knowledge, creates subjects and claims truth.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Chapter two provides a detailed discussion of the key issues surrounding the definition of dyslexia and how it is operationalised within education. A brief history of the term dyslexia is discussed, highlighting the continued contestation of the term throughout history across the fields of research, education, medicine and psychology. This is followed by an outline of the theoretical approach for this thesis in chapter three, which is a Foucauldian approach focusing on the main themes of subjectivity, discourse, normalisation and power. This chapter highlights the importance of the dyslexic identity and discusses research literature regarding dyslexia from a Foucauldian perspective. Chapter four provides some further key definitions regarding the media, journalism and news. This chapter highlights the variety

and complexity of the media in the UK and examines the impact of this complexity in relation to this thesis. Key literature concerning the media, Foucault and dyslexia is also discussed in this chapter. Chapter five details the methodological approaches taken in this study, these being a combination of Corpus Linguistics and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. A detailed discussion of how these individual methods have been combined is provided within this chapter. Details regarding the sample and methods of analysis as well as ethical considerations are discussed within this chapter. Chapter six examines the data collected for this thesis and gives a detailed view of the structures of the final corpora built especially for this thesis. Chapter seven focuses on how homogenous the specialist and non-specialist corpora are and discusses how differently these two types of media construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. Chapter eight presents the data collected for this study and the themes found within the data. The implications for education are also discussed within this chapter. Chapter nine, the conclusion, discusses the main findings from each of the previous thematic chapters and contextualises them within a broader research narrative.

2. The social construction of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject

> ‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said… ‘it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more or less’
>
> ‘The question is,’ said Alice, ‘whether you can make words mean so many different things.’
>
> ‘The question is,’ said Humpty Dumpty, ‘which is to be the master – that’s all’
>
> (Carroll, 1872, p. n.p)

Words and labels become loaded with dominant discourse and can take on a life of their own. They can also adopt new meanings and meanings can change over time. As Humpty Dumpty explains in the opening quote, a word can mean so many different things to different people and cultures and therefore words can be used in different ways with the meanings not always clear. This chapter begins with a discussion of the problems in defining dyslexia both within education as well as the wider academic environment. It will give a history of the term dyslexia and how it has been used since its inception in 1862. The debate surrounding whether people with dyslexia differ from those classed as poor readers will also be discussed before moving onto reviewing the key research carried out which investigates the teachers’ understanding of the term. Finally, the chapter will discuss the social construction of dyslexia.

2.1 The concept of dyslexia and a brief history of its use in medicine, psychology, and education

‘Dyslexia may perplexia’ Marion Welchman (as cited in Rice and Brooks 2004, p.33).

As the quote above indicates, there are many issues surrounding the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the label dyslexia in education

and academic research. Indeed, many researchers such as Snowling (2001, 2012), J. Rose (2009), Elliott and Grigorenko (2014) and Elliott and Nicolson (2016), state that dyslexia is a heavily contested concept. Snowling (2001, p. 1) goes onto argue that the term is 'unclear and inconsistent' and that it has been 'controversial since its inception.' This is illustrated further with the research carried out by Rice and Brooks (2004) who investigated some of the research criteria used in studies of dyslexia as well as definitions of dyslexia by advocacy groups, practitioners, official definitions in government reports and dictionary definitions. They found over 50 different definitions of dyslexia in their research review. They stated that:

> there are many definitions of dyslexia but no consensus…it appears that 'dyslexia' is not one thing but many, in so far as it serves as a conceptual clearing-house for a number of reading skills, deficits and difficulties, with a number of causes' (Rice & Brooks, 2004, p. 11).

Consequently, many different terms for reading difficulties are used interchangeably such as dyslexia, reading disability, reading disorder, specific learning difficulties, specific reading disabilities reading impaired, reading disabled and reading disordered (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014; Snowling, 2001). This presents many problems in defining and using the concept of dyslexia in educational research and professional practice such as reading interventions for children with dyslexia. Indeed, Brown Waesche, Schatschneider, Maner, Ahmed, and Wagner (2011, p. 296) argue that 'without an agreed-on definition that can be implemented reliably and validly, understanding the nature, causes, and best treatments for reading disability is unlikely.' Furthermore, 'the complexity and diversity within the research field makes it difficult to operationalise consistently for the purposes of identification and formal diagnostic assessment' (Ryder & Norwich, 2019, p. 110).

Adding to the confusion around defining dyslexia, Soler (2009) and Campbell (2013) argue that there has also been a change in how dyslexia has been defined since its first use in 1862 by a German professor called Rudolf Berlin. Berlin first used the term *dyslexia* to describe an adult patient who

had lost the ability to read due to a brain lesion. He went onto discover a further five cases in twenty years (Campbell, 2013, p. 88). This discovery grounded the use of the term dyslexia in medical approaches and in 1872 Broadbent added another ten cases to that discovered by Berlin and described the cases using neurological descriptions (Broadbent, 1872).This firmly places the problem of dyslexia in the field of medicine and thus medical discourse was used to describe and define dyslexia at this time. Five years after Broadbent's paper, Kussmaul (1877) used the term *acquired word blindness* which is commonly used in association with the term dyslexia. Kussmaul, like Broadbent, described a case with an adult patient who had lost the ability to read after suffering from aphasia. Campbell (2013, p. 79) describes this introduction of the term *acquired word blindness* as a new diagnostic category and thus as a new technology of power (i.e., a new way of categorising and disciplining society using norms). In the UK, Hinshelwood (1895) developed the work of Kusmmaul further by suggesting that word-blindness was caused by damage to the part of the brain that controls visual memory. The research by Hinshelwood was significant because it was carried out by an assistant eye surgeon rather than a general physician. Hinshelwood (1895) reviewed many articles about word-blindness that were published after the work of Broadbent in 1872. He argued that 'there are different forms of word-blindness which must be carefully distinguished from one another' (Hinshelwood, 1895, p. 1565). So already in the early stages of developing diagnostic criteria for dyslexia, there was a debate among physicians about the conceptualisation and operationalisation of word blindness/dyslexia. Indeed, by 1896 Broadbent argues that 'in his judgement the employment of the term word-blindness has been misleading and unfortunate' (cited in Hinshelwood, 1896, p.1453). Interestingly Campbell (2013, p. 84) points out that 'the debates over terminology that later came to play such an important role in the history of dyslexia were present before anybody had been diagnosed as having a congenital difficulty with reading.'

The term *dyslexia* was not used to describe reading difficulties in an English paper until 1896 where Hinshelwood (1896) adopted the term from Professor Berlin:

> The term ‘dyslexia’ applied to these cases by Professor Berlin is a convenient one and I have adopted it as describing the prominent symptom in my case. Professor Berlin regards it as a special form of word-blindness, due to an interruption in the conductivity of the connecting fibres of the visual centre in the lower parietal lobe of the left hemisphere. This view has been borne out by post-mortem examination (Hinshelwood, 1896, p. 1453).

All the cases so far discuss word-blindness/dyslexia as something that has been acquired through brain injury. It is not until the work by Dr Pringle Morgan that cases of what he termed as *congenital word-blindness* are reported. In these cases the characteristics of word-blindness are present from birth and he attributes the symptoms as being a result of ‘defective development’ in the angular gyrus (Morgan, 1896, p. 1378). During this time, medical discourse was still being used to describe dyslexia as it was still seen as a medical and not a social or educational issue.

The focus of the paper by Morgan (1896) describes a case of a normally developing, bright boy who was struggling to learn to read:

> He has always been a bright and intelligent boy, quick at games, and in no way inferior to others in his age. His great difficulty has been, and is now his inability to learn to read. This inability is so remark-able, and so pronounced, that I have no doubt it is due to some congenital defect. (1896, p. 1378)

Similar observations were also made by papers published by Hinshelwood (1896, 1900, 1904) and Nettleship (1901). These observations became especially important for later definitions of dyslexia which encompassed the idea that you must have a high IQ to have dyslexia. This later become known

as the IQ discrepancy hypothesis. The IQ discrepancy hypothesis differentiates between those poor readers with high IQs known as dyslexics, and those with lower IQs known as 'garden variety poor readers' (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014). Indeed Elbeheri and Everatt (2009) argue that it is now impossible to separate the association of IQ with dyslexia within social and political discourse. This may be due to the fact that the IQ discrepancy hypothesis was widely implemented in the diagnosis of dyslexia for many years following the famous research carried out in the Isle of Wight by Rutter and Yule (1975). This research differentiated children with 'specific reading retardation' from those who were 'general backwards readers' based on their IQ scores. Nevertheless, as the above quotation from Morgan (1896) shows, the link between IQ and word-blindness/dyslexia was made much earlier than in 1975. Importantly, studies by Fletcher (2009); Hoskyn and Swanson (2000); Stuebing, Barth, Molfese, Weiss, and Fletcher (2009); Stuebing et al. (2002) all show that there is little evidence of an IQ-achievement discrepancy being a predictor of decoding related differences between low-achieving children and those diagnosed with dyslexia. Furthermore, studies carried out by Flowers, Meyer, Lovato, Wood, and Felton (2001) and Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, and Fletcher (1996) have shown that investigating IQ discrepancy does not give much prognostic information about the future reading performance of children. Indeed, a study as early as 1921 found no correlation between reading ability and intelligence (Fildes, 1921).

During the period of 1901-09 dyslexia/word-blindness continued to be debated in the field of medicine. Most research papers that were published during this time were in the field of specialist ophthalmology (e.g., Hinshelwood (1902, 1904); Nettleship (1901)). Therefore, during the early twentieth century, dyslexia was considered to be an ophthalmic problem. However, recommendations were made by Hinshelwood (1902) for the education of those diagnosed with word-blindness. He recommends:

> There is no use of attempting to teach such children reading in a class along with other children with normally developed brains. The contrast

> between their difficulty and the facility of the other will only discourage them. Such children must be taught separately by special methods adapted to help them overcome their difficulties (Hinshelwood, 1902, pp. 98-99)

What Hinshelwood is suggesting here is that the children with word-blindness should be segregated from mainstream classrooms and taught on their own using specialist reading interventions. Word-blindness was becoming an educational concern.

The hereditary hypothesis was the next move in terms of defining word-blindness with both CJ Thomas (1905) and Hinshelwood (1907) adopting this approach. The hereditary hypothesis was initially observed by Thomas who noticed that word-blindness occurred across different members of the same family on several separate occasions. This led him to believe that was hereditary or familial. Hinshelwood strongly supported Thomas' observations in his paper titled *Four cases of congenital word-blindness occurring in the same family*. He states:

> In this paper Dr Thomas called special attention to the fact that congenital word-blindness may assume a family type and that a hereditary tendency is probable. The present example of four members of the same family with congenital word-blindness is a brilliant confirmation of the correctness of Dr Thomas's observation (Hinshelwood, 1907, p. 1230).

As can be seen from the discussion in this chapter so far, Hinshelwood was a key player in the development of the diagnostic criteria for word-blindness and his papers were very influential. However, they were not without criticism with Rutherford (1909) and Jackson (1906) questioning Hinshelwood's use of terminology, particularly his use of the term *congenital word-blindness* which Rutherford (1909) deemed as unscientific. He explains that 'the term seems inappropriate for a condition that exists with normal visual acuteness and

normal fields of vision' (Jackson, 1906, p. 843). He suggested a more scientific term: *developmental alexia* and defined the term as follows:

> The condition is essentially a failure of development, or a delayed development of a group of co-ordinations, or a co-ordinating centre essential to the recognition of written or printed characters. The term developmental alexia is, therefore, suggested as most specifically indicating the condition under consideration (Jackson, 1906, p. 843).

He does, however, agree with Hinshelwood and Thomas that alexia is hereditary along with Rutherford (1909). Indeed, it was the finding that word-blindness was hereditary which drew Rutherford to investigate word-blindness. It is also in this paper where he uses the term *dyslexia congentia* (Rutherford, 1909, p. 484), as a synonym for *congenital word-blindness*, although he fails to give his reasons for preferring this new term. Etymologically the term dyslexia can be derived from Greek; *dys* means difficulty and *lexis* means words: the literal translation is difficulty with words. However, Campbell (2013, p. 130) argues that the term dyslexia is derived from using medical terminology whereby *dys* means bad, *lex* can refer to reading or language and *ia* is Latin and means disease or disorder. This would mean that the translation for *dyslexia* is bad reading disorder. Thus, Campbell (2013, p. 131) argues that with the change in terminology employed by Rutherford, has a negative connotation and that 'Rutherford's diagnostic device refers negatively to the diagram of the norm, while Hinshelwood engaged positively with it.' Therefore, this is the first time that dyslexia had been viewed negatively within the academic field.

In the UK, Hinshelwood remained the authority on congenital word-blindness. However, a larger number of people were diagnosed with congenital word-blindness with the cases not being as severe and clear-cut as Hinshelwood intended. This led to him coining the term *pure congenital word-blindness* which he defines as:

> I use the term ‘pure word-blindness’—that is, cases in which the brain of the patient is otherwise normal, and hence the intelligence and general mental powers of the patient good. Such cases must always be clearly distinguished from those-in which inability to learn to read is accompanied by a general lack of intelligence and general failure of all the mental powers. In such cases the difficulty in learning to read is not due to a purely local condition, but to a general lack of cerebral development, and hence are not included in the hopeful statement made about pure cases of congenital word- blindness (Hinshelwood, 1907, p. 1232).

It was also around this time when there was a shift in fields concerning congenital word-blindness. Up until this point in time, congenital word-blindness was the concern of medical and specialist ophthalmology, but this changed around in 1907 and it became a concern in the field of educational psychology. This was due to the work of Witmer who was trying to establish the field of clinical psychology and had an interest in reading difficulties. Witmer was concerned with those children deemed to be educatable rather than impossible to educate (Witmer, 1907b). Therefore, those children who were diagnosed as having congenital word-blindness met this criterion. In the process of establishing the field of clinical psychology, Witmer established links with schools and educationalists and it was these links which proved to be important in the move in diagnosis away from ophthalmology to psychology. Campbell (2013, p. 153) argues that ‘psychology appears to have been better placed than ophthalmology to disperse its diagnosis into educational environments, as its technologies and practices were more amenable to this environment, therefore gaining access to a larger population’. Due to these links with the schools, one of Witmer’s areas of focus was educational, specifically how the children with congenital word-blindness should be taught and developing teaching practices became one of their primary research areas (Witmer, 1907b).

In both papers published by Witmer (1907a, 1907b) he employs a new terminology; instead of using *congenital word-blindness* to describe the condition he coins a new term: *amnesia visualis verbalis*. This coinage can

be seen as a challenge to ophthalmology as *amnesia visualis verbalis* is firmly under the domain of psychology unlike congenital word-blindness. The term also emphasises that reading difficulties are associated with memory rather than sight which again challenges the field of ophthalmology; reading difficulties are now seen a result of an issue with the brain rather than with sight.

In 1916, Witmer again chooses to employ slightly different terminology to describe those children with reading difficulties. He uses the term *congenital verbal amnesia* (Witmer, 1916, p. 189). He describes a case of a boy who is nearly eleven years old and is 'backward in school progress. That is what we would call true backwardness, pedagogical backwardness. It is retardation on education scale' (Witmer, 1916, p. 184). This shows a shift in the thinking of reading disabilities as Hinshelwood emphasised the intelligence of the subjects they studied. Importantly, Witmer also puts forward the idea that congenital aphasias are not a barrier to education (Witmer, 1916, p. 190). This demonstrates that reading difficulties were becoming an interest in the field of education and that the effects of reading difficulties were being considered in relation to literacy skills and not solely from a medical perspective as they were historically. Furthermore, he also applies this diagnosis to those who have a 'little congenital alexia' (Witmer, 1916, p. 190), unlike Hinshelwood who only applied congenital word-blindness to severe cases.

Schmitt wrote several influential research papers concerning reading difficulties (Schmitt, 1914, 1915, 1918a, 1918b). She was the first researcher to publish a paper in a teaching journal concerning congenital word-blindness. She also makes reference to the term *dyslexia* and suggests that it is used as an alternative to *congenital word-blindness* but states that *congenital word-blindness* is the term used by nearly all writers on this condition and for that reason will be used throughout this report' (Schmitt, 1918a, p. 680). Therefore, congenital word-blindness can be seen to be

employed here by Schmitt as purely a literary device and not because it is the most suitable title for the disorder (Campbell, 2013).

Fildes (1921) and Orton (1925) were both influential in moving on the discourse surrounding reading disabilities. With the work of Orton moving the discussions further into the field of psychology which continued to influence the understandings and definitions of dyslexia (Soler, 2009). This is reflected by Minogue (1927) who indicates that reading difficulties now fully fall into the remit of psychology and education rather than medical and ophthalmological. Therefore, this reflects a shift in reading disabilities discourse.

In a paper by Ford (1928) he outlines a case study of a boy with congenital word-blindness which was not diagnosed early in his education. He describes the boy as 'he was guilty of lying, stealing from home and school, truancy and being a disturber in school' (p.74) and Ford argues that the reasons for this boy's misbehaviour is direct result of not receiving a diagnosis early enough. This is the first time where socio-environmental factors other than intelligence are considered by those studying reading difficulties. This change in factors could be due to education now having authority over reading disabilities. Indeed, from 1910 onwards 'teachers and educationalists begun to devote serious attention to all aspects of reading in their professional journals. Children who found learning to read difficult became a concern of these writers during this period' (Campbell, 2013, p. 197).

It was not until 1937 when Ombredanne used the term *dyslexia* in the First Congress of Child Psychiatry in Paris that *dyslexia* begun to be used with more regularity. However, the first published paper that used the term *dyslexia* throughout was not published until 1950 (Hallgren, 1950). In 1959, Herman a neurologist at the University Hospital of Copenhagen, provided a classical definition of dyslexia which he defined as:

> a deficit in the acquisition of an age-appropriate level of reading and writing ability; this deficit is due to constitutional (hereditary) factors, it is often accompanied by difficulties with other kinds of symbols (numeric, musical, etc.), it exists in the absence of other cognitive or sensory deficits, and in the absence of inhibitory influences, past or present, in the internal or external environment' (as cited in Guardiola 2001, p. 11)[1].

Therefore, from the 1960s onwards the term 'dyslexia' was widely adopted in both research and practice. Nevertheless, it took until the 1970s to be acknowledged within legislation. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970, section 27 was the first appearance of dyslexia in a legal document in the UK. The Bullock report (1975) and the Warnock report (1978) were quick to follow. The Warnock report led to dyslexic children being considered as having Special Educational Needs and this was implemented in the Education Act in 1981 (Department for Education and Science, 1981). However, also in 1981 Tansley and Panckhurst (1981) recommended the use of the term *specific learning difficulties*. This adds to the pilferer of terms already used to describe dyslexia since its inception. Indeed, British Psychological Society (2005) argue that today, the term dyslexia and specific learning difficulties are used synonymously. A summary table of the key players and events discussed in this section can be found in appendix 2.

The definition of reading difficulties has been in a state of constant refinement since its original conception as *word blindness*. Therefore, it is no surprise that there is a lack of consensus of what dyslexia means and how to put it into practice. Indeed, Elliott and Grigorenko (2014) go as far as to question the usefulness of the term *dyslexia* and argue that there is little that distinguishes a poor reader from a person diagnosed with dyslexia. This is known as the 'dyslexia debate' and was misreported widely in the media where they incorrectly reported that the researchers were claiming that dyslexia did not exist. This goes alongside earlier reports in the media that

[1] Original text is not in English.

dyslexia is a middle class myth (Malpas, 2012). Although this debate is not the focus of this study, these newspaper reports have been included within the sample for this study. Additionally, Elliott and Gibbs (2008, p. 488) argue that dyslexia is a socially defined construct and that 'there appears no clear-cut scientific basis for differential diagnosis of dyslexia versus poor reader.' Indeed, many researchers, such as Rice and Brooks (2004) Snowling (2008), continue to use exclusionary definitions of dyslexia so that comparisons can be made between poor readers. Even the Rose report questions the dividing line between those diagnosed with dyslexia and poor readers (J. Rose, 2009, p. 33).

As this section has demonstrated, there is much debate around the concept of dyslexia with many terms being used interchangeably as well as a lot of overlap between the terms used. However, there is some consensus about what a definition of dyslexia should include. G. Reid (2007, p. 5) acknowledges that most definitions of dyslexia include the following:

- The causes of dyslexia are neurological and genetic in origin.
- Phonological, visual, and auditory processing difficulties are associated with dyslexia.
- People with dyslexia have difficulties with memory, time management, processing speed, organisation, sequencing, and planning.
- Specialist teaching is needed such as over-learning.
- Dyslexia is comorbid.

Therefore, dyslexia can be seen as a genetic disorder which predominantly affects reading, spelling, and writing but can also affect memory and organisation skills. It is thought to be caused by a problem with the brain and many people who have dyslexia have difficulties with processing visual and/or auditory information. Dyslexia often occurs with other difficulties and one of the most common comorbid difficulties is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), with an estimated 5% of the population being affected

(American Psychiatric Association, 2000). In the UK, dyslexia is classed as a specific learning difficulty (SpLD), and although the terms are not synonymous, they are often used as if they are. In the US, the term 'specific learning disability' is used in the same way. This section has discussed the concept of dyslexia and how it has developed over time. It has highlighted that dyslexia started out as a medical term which gradually moved into the field of psychology and education where it remains today. This section has emphasised that dyslexia has always been a contested concept and that throughout history it has never had a definite definition which causes issues for diagnosis, intervention, and prevalence.

2.2 Different educational views on dyslexia

Although there has been some recent research into professional understanding of dyslexia, it is a topic which has been largely unexplored. In the current literature, the main focus of research has been the understanding of dyslexia from a teachers' or preservice teachers' perspective. Washburn, Joshi, and Cantrell (2010) and Washburn, Binks-Cantrell, and Joshi (2013) investigated the understanding of dyslexia from the perspectives of pre-service teachers in America and Britain. From these studies they found that both groups of pre-service teachers still held the common misunderstanding that dyslexia is caused by a visual perception difficulty which results in people with dyslexia seeing letters and numbers backwards. Serry and Hammond (2015) built upon this research in Australia with teachers and other professionals (such as psychologists and pathologists) and found similar results, with 79% of participants responding incorrectly to the item *seeing letters and numbers backwards is a characteristic of dyslexia* in the questionnaire they provided (Serry & Hammond, 2015, p. 10). Previous studies (c.f. Hudson, High, and Al Otaiba (2007); Politt, Pollock, and Waller (2004); Sanders (2001)) all found that this misunderstanding was common amongst teachers and other professionals in the field of education. These findings would imply that this is a common and widely held misunderstanding of dyslexia within the field of education. One of the reasons for these

misunderstandings could be because the education system in the UK for training teachers does not include training on dyslexia. This led to the British Dyslexia Association launching an ongoing campaign in 2012 for dyslexia awareness training to be included with initial teacher training (BDA, 2014). Malpas (2012, p. 7) argues that many teachers receive no information regarding dyslexia during their training even though up to 'five children in each class will be affected.' He goes onto argue that 'this lack of appreciation of the issues and the solutions will inevitably lead to the wider ignorance within society' (Malpas, 2012, p. 7). Furthermore, research conducted by Gibbs and Elliott (2015) in the UK and Worthy, Lammert, et al. (2018) in the US, both found that the educators in their studies felt unprepared to teach children identified as dyslexic.

Nevertheless, teachers and preservice teachers have also been found in some studies to have knowledge of dyslexia which reflects recent research. For example, Serry and Hammond (2015, p. 14) found in their study that over 95% of the participants 'correctly indicated that dyslexia is a life-long condition that is inheritable, unrelated to IQ and results in difficulty decoding words.' Furthermore, Washburn et al. (2013) also found that the majority of the preservice teachers correctly identified that dyslexia was not caused by the home environment. Therefore, what can be drawn from these studies is that teachers and preservice teachers have both knowledge and misconceptions about dyslexia which provides an uncertainty in their knowledge as a whole and this can impact their practice especially in identifying children at risk of dyslexia.

Research carried out in the UK higher education sector also highlights some misconceptions of dyslexia. Ryder and Norwich (2018) carried out research investigating the views of 118 professional assessors of dyslexia in UK higher education using both a questionnaire and interviews. Their results confirmed concerns about the consistency and reliably of the both the label dyslexia and how dyslexia is currently being diagnosed in this sector. They

found that the historical discrepancy model of dyslexia was ‘widely accepted, if not explicitly then at least implicitly’ (Ryder & Norwich, 2018, p. 122).This means that despite research repeatedly demonstrating that IQ is not related to dyslexia, there is evidence that in the HE sector, IQ still being used as part of diagnostic criteria for the diagnosis of dyslexia. Furthermore, they found that the majority of participants deemed that processing skills such as phonological awareness, working memory and processing speed were ‘important but not necessary’ in the diagnosis of dyslexia. This is once more contrary to research findings in academic literature where there is some consensus that the definition of dyslexia should include phonological awareness and working memory difficulties G. Reid (2007, p. 5). Further research by Ryder and Norwich (2019) revealed additional evidence of inadequate knowledge of current dyslexia research by lecturers in UK HE who were not sure how to meet the needs of students with dyslexia.

I would argue that many professionals and parents would gain their knowledge about dyslexia from the media (either consciously or subconsciously) and thus this research will highlight whether misconceptions are portrayed in the media and thus one of the reasons why teachers and other educational professionals are unsure about what dyslexia is due to conflicting views put forward in the newspapers. Indeed, Fišer (2018) found that preservice teachers’ leading source of information about dyslexia was the internet (44%), followed by the TV (17%), newspapers and magazines (12%) and personal experience (4%). He also noted that the students from Osijek found that newspapers and magazines were a ‘valuable source of information’ (Fišer, 2018, p. 74). Therefore, this study can highlight misconceptions portrayed in the media and in particular specialist media which may impact the knowledge of dyslexia that teachers and other educators have. Furthermore, misconceptions such as the link between creativity and dyslexia often reported in the news (see section 8.1) can lead to educators making assumptions about children with dyslexia which are not always accurate, i.e., not all dyslexic children will be creative or have a love

of art. Repetitive discourse in the media can be used to reinforce as well as introduce misconceptions to educators, parents and the general public.

2.3 The social construction of the dyslexic subject

Dyslexia, like all other special educational needs and disabilities, is socially constructed. Hacking (1999, p. 2) describes social construction using the example of motherhood, he argues that 'the idea of social construction has been wonderfully liberating. It reminds us, say, that motherhood and its meanings are not fixed and inevitable, the consequence of child-bearing and rearing. They are the product of historical events, social forces, and ideology'. However, social construction is not always a positive experience as Hacking goes onto note 'for all their power to liberate, those very words, ''social construction,'' can work like cancerous cells. Once seeded, they replicate out of hand' (Hacking, 1999, p. 3). In terms of the social construction of dyslexia, people with dyslexia are affected by the ways in which having dyslexia are conceived and described by society as well as by themselves. In other words, social construction is intricately linked with the idea of identity. Identity can be seen in two different ways: as a group identity based on shared social experiences and personal identity which are multiple and constructed in relation to discourse and power (Hall, 1996). Pollak (2005, p. 51) argues that for students with dyslexia 'beliefs about dyslexia have a profound effect on their sense of identity'. This section will give a brief overview of some of the literature concerned with the social construction of the dyslexic identity.

In western society the dyslexic identity is constructed in relation to literacy, intelligence and socio-economic success (Campbell, 2013; Thompson, Bacon, & Auburn, 2015). Indeed, because dyslexia is seen as a special educational need it perpetuates the idea that people with dyslexia are needy and disabled which can result in a disabled self-identity and a sense of

powerlessness (Zeleke, 2004). However, this is not always the case as Bacon and Bennett (2013) found in their study of higher education students studying art. They found that the dyslexic students' skills were valued, and this resulted in positive identities which embraced their dyslexic strengths. Nevertheless, other studies have shown that since dyslexia is negatively constructed within society many dyslexic identities have negative connotations. One such study found three identities of dyslexia: learning disabled, differently abled and socially disabled (Thompson et al., 2015). The identity of learning disabled was seen as a forced identity by educational settings linked with unintelligence and negative learner identity. The differently abled identity was more positive and focused on the strengths rather than the deficits of the dyslexic participants. This drew on the idea that dyslexics learn and think differently and was sometimes linked with overcoming adversity. The identity of socially disabled was linked with the social model of disability which argues that it is barriers in society which cause disability rather than the individual themselves (Oliver, Barnes, & Oliver, 2012). The participants in this study saw that the barriers for them in society were created by a literacy-oriented society and that their dyslexic strengths were undervalued (Thompson et al., 2015, p. 1338).

The identities of teachers with dyslexia was investigated by Burns and Bell (2011). They found three major identities from the eight interviews they carried out. These were: the sensitive and empathetic teacher, the teacher capitalising on personal strengths and the perseverant and proactive teacher. All these identities can be seen as looking at dyslexia in a positive light. Their self-identity is thus positive. The teachers in the study were open with their students in disclosing their dyslexia and positioned themselves as determined and persistent. This enabled them to empathise with their students' struggles and they wanted to make sure that their own students did not have a negative experience of education in the same ways that they did. It is suggested by the authors of this study that the dyslexic teachers have reframed their disability which Gerber, Ginsberg, and Reiff (1992) argue is essential for people with learning difficulties to become successful in their

careers. A study investigating students in nurse education found a much more negative experience and two identities emerged from the study: a marginalised identity and a patient risk identity (Evans, 2014). However, the study found evidence that students were not internalising the traditional sociocultural constructions of disability but included more positive expressions when constructing their own self-identities. They were found to actively engage with their dyslexic identity, challenging normative discourses which focus on the difficulties faced by people with dyslexia.

These studies show that people with dyslexia have both positive and negative identities. More positive self-identities adopted by educators can lead to them being empathetic to students experiencing similar frustrations with literacy as they themselves experienced during schooling. These studies also demonstrated that people with dyslexia can reframe their disability to create success in their careers. For this study, self-identity and how people with dyslexia create and shape discourses around their own dyslexia is not investigated. However, how dyslexic subjects are created and subjected to discourse and whether there is evidence of positive dyslexic identities is of interest to this research and thus will be investigated.

2.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the problems of defining dyslexia throughout history. It has illustrated that the concept of dyslexia is not straightforward leading to confusion and uncertainty. This has led to some researchers questioning not only the use of the term, but also whether there is a difference between poor readers and those classed as dyslexic especially when it comes to intervention. The British Psychological Society (2005, p. 15) argue that word *dyslexia* has been avoided in educational practice ‘because of its predominant emphasis on within child causative factors and its perceived effects on social policy.’ Indeed, this chapter has highlighted that dyslexia as a concept has been contested since its original conception in 1862. It has

discussed the move from the field of medicine into psychology and education as the concept was adapted over time. The impact of the uncertainty around how to define dyslexia was debated in the field of education drawing on studies which have investigated how knowledgeable teaching professionals are with regards to dyslexia. In terms of self-identity the research has shown that there is mixed response with some people with dyslexia adopting a positive identity like the teachers in the study by Burns and Bell (2011) and others adopting a more negative identity like the nurses in the study by Evans (2014). The group identity of people with dyslexia seems to be negative as these identities are forced upon the dyslexic by society who see dyslexia as a negative impairment in a society which highly values literacy. Finally, this chapter has discussed how dyslexic identities are socially constructed concluding that group identities are often forced upon the dyslexic by society due to the importance of literacy in the Western world. The next chapter outlines the theoretical framework for this thesis.

3 Foucauldian theoretical approach

This chapter outlines how Foucauldian theorisation will be used within this thesis. It explores the key concepts of discourse, subjectivity, normalisation and power with reference to some of the key literature concerned with dyslexia and learning difficulties from a Foucauldian perspective. Although, in this chapter, these concepts are compartmentalised into separate sections, Foucault uses them in an interrelated way, for example it is difficult to discuss how subjects are formed without discussing the power relationships that are in play to form these subjects. Similarly, it is difficult to discuss normalisation without exploring the discourses surrounding *normal* and *other*. Therefore, throughout this chapter there will be overlap between the different key concepts discussed.

3.1 Discourse and dyslexia

This thesis will operationalise a Foucauldian concept of discourse. Foucault discusses the concept of discourse in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972a) but it is a key concept that runs through many of his works. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault (1972a, p. 80) uses the term *discourse* to refer to 'the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements'. He also uses the term *discourse* to refer to groups of discourse such as the discourse of education. According to Hall (1997, p. 44), from a Foucauldian perspective:

> [Discourse] constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others.

Indeed, Foucault argued that nothing has meaning outside of discourse (Foucault, 1972a). Furthermore, discourse is never about just one statement or text and is subject to change. In fact, Foucault (1970, p. 67) argues that discourses are 'discontinuous practices, which cross each other, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other'. This is especially evident within the media both across different newsbrands and within them as will become evident later in this thesis.

This thesis aims to investigate the social construction of the term *dyslexia* in specialist and non-specialist media. In order to do this, discourses of dyslexia in both specialist and non-specialist media will be studied. By using the term *discourse,* I take the position that discourse is not just about language but is a way of constructing and influencing knowledge and ways of thinking. In other words, discourse is intrinsically linked with power as it dictates what it is acceptable and not acceptable to say in a particular society. Indeed, Jager and Maier (2016, p. 112) argue that discourses 'do not merely reflect reality. Rather, discourses shape and enable (social) reality.' Furthermore, discourses produce subjects and different groups of people (including the media and educational professionals) and can be referred to what Foucault termed as 'powerful actors' (Foucault, 1972a). These powerful actors have power over discourse and can thus determine what is classed as knowledge or truth about a particular social group such as the criminal, the mental health patient, the child with special needs, the dyslexic or a particular concept such as inclusion or dyslexia. Often in fields of education, psychology or medicine certain actors become specialists within their fields and this establishes their dominant ideas which go onto shape the structure of society. For example, in *The History of Madness* Foucault discusses the discourse produced by experts in the fields of psychiatry, psychology and social work that construct madness and normalcy (Foucault, 2013). He argued that these experts 'became a major authority in society that delimited, designated, named and established madness as an object' (Foucault, 1972a, p. 42). However, Foucault argues that discourse is never shaped by one

individual but rather by society as a whole; everybody co-produces discourse and thus discourse evolves over time (Jager & Maier, 2016). In other words, discourse is 'the product of collective thoughts and actions (Fendler, 2010, p. 36).

The basic unit of discourse is the statement. Indeed, Foucault described discourse as a group of statements which provide ways of representing knowledge through language (Foucault, 1972a). He referred to the statement as the 'atom of discourse' (Foucault, 1972a, p. 80). Furthermore, Foucault recognised that discourse is never just about one statement or text:

> There is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement; but a statement always belongs to a series or a whole, always plays a role among other statements, deriving support from and distinguishing itself from them: it is always part of a network of statements, in which it has a role, however minimal it may be, to play. (Foucault, 1986a, p 99).

Furthermore, Foucault referred to discourse as 'a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation' (Foucault, 1972a, p. 117). Foucault defined a discursive formation as follows:

> Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity, we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (Foucault, 1972a, p. 38)

In the *Archaeology of Knowledge,* Foucault (1972a) recognises that there are four levels of discursive formation: the formation of objects, the formation of subjects, the formation of concepts and the formation of strategies. This thesis will be primarily concerned with two of these discursive formations: the formation of dyslexic subjects and the formation of the concept of dyslexia in

both specialist and non-specialist media. Furthermore, during the process of conducting this research, I expect to encounter major types of discourse including educational discourse, media discourse, discourses of Special Educational Needs (SEN), medical discourse and discourses of popular culture. However, it is important to note that these divisions of discourse 'whether our own, or those contemporary with the discourse under examination – are always themselves reflexive categories, principles of classification, normative rules, institutionalised types' (Foucault, 1972a, p. 22). There has been little research on dyslexia which has been conducted from a Foucauldian perspective. What research has been carried out has mainly investigated the discourses of dyslexia (c.f. Reid and Weatherley-Valle 2004, Collinson, Dunne and Woolhouse 2012, Collinson and Penketh 2010, Cameron and Billington 2015). Discourse around SEN and dyslexia has multiple purposes; it shapes the language, identification and construction of the categories of SEN and dyslexia and also constructs the identities of the people identified as having SEN or dyslexia. Indeed, D. K. Reid and Weatherly-Valle (2004) identified three discourse types within learning difficulties discourse: scientific, medical and psychological, institutional and legislative and social, political and cultural discourses. Although D. K. Reid and Weatherly-Valle (2004) use the US term *learning disabilities*, which refers to children with cognitive impairments, similar examples of discourse categories can be found in the UK when referring to dyslexia. For example, Campbell (2013) and Soler (2009) identified medical, scientific, psychological, legislative and professional/expert discourses in the UK when they were studying the historical construction of dyslexia. Soler (2009) argues that professional and expert discourses of dyslexia are rooted in medical and psychological discourses which have impacted educational policy and practice. This is supported by a US study by Richards and Clark (2018), who argue that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries professional specialisms in medicine, psychiatry and education emerged 'as part of the disciplinary and professional control and ownership of knowledge about disability and the disabled' (Richards & Clark, 2018, p. 189). This knowledge focused on the deficit model of disability which reinforces the dominant social values associated with disabled people at this time. Richards and Clark (2018, p. 189) argue that

these dominant social values were vulnerability, passivity, exclusion, irrationality and incompetency. Brown, David, and Smallman (2017, p. 83) also discuss how, in North America, the term *learning disability* (which has been assigned to learners who have difficulty 'obtaining information in academic settings'), is 'entrenched with political, legal and medical valances'. They argue that the medical discourse associated with those with learning difficulties has done nothing to aid the understanding of learners with special needs. Indeed, Brown et al. (2017) propose that a larger rethink of the delivery of the curriculum (within a university setting) would benefit all students rather than the current system which advocates that basic accommodations be made for those learners with learning disabilities.

3.2 Foucault and subjectivity

Foucault uses the French term *assujettissement* to describe subjectivity; In English this has been translated to mean subjectification, subjection or subjugation. Foucault uses this term to mean two things, in his earlier work *Birth of the Clinic* (Foucault, 1975b) and *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977b) he refers to how subjects are created and subjected to discourse (Foucault, 1982b, p. 208). In his later work on sexuality, he refers to how individuals become subjects through the use of discourse (Foucault, 1978, 1985, 1986). This thesis focuses on Foucault's earlier, more dominant meaning of subjectivity. The research focuses on how a person with dyslexia becomes a 'subject' within the media's discursive practice and will use the following definition of subjectivity: 'the process of becoming a subject within a discursive power/knowledge production' (Lehn-Christiansen, 2011, p. 312).

For Foucault, subject positions are created, negotiated, accepted and transformed within everyday discursive practices (Lehn-Christiansen, 2011, p. 312). Therefore, like the term discourse, subjectivity is also intrinsically linked with power as it is power relations which shape subjectivities. Foucault notes:

> It must be remembered that power is not a set of mechanisms of negation, refusal, exclusion…It likely produces the individuals themselves. Individuality, individual identity are products of power (Foucault, 1975c).[2]

Furthermore, subjectification is also linked with knowledge in the ways in which knowledge can produce discourse and define 'the way certain things [such as dyslexia] are represented, thought about, practiced and studied' (Hall, 1997, p. 6). Indeed, the media is a disciplinary power as it shapes knowledge, creates subjects and claims truth (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2012). The use of the concept 'power' is dominant throughout all of Foucault's works and will be discussed further in section 3.4 (below).

Discourses produce and shape individuals and thus individual identities. One such identity relevant to this study is the special needs child. The special needs child will have been identified as having needs which differ from "ordinary" children and special education focuses on difference as being a deviance from the norm. Special education has its own discourse and is a 'socially constructed discursive formation' that has been produced 'as a response to children who struggle in school' (D. K. Reid & Weatherly-Valle, 2004, p. 470). Special education discourse is intrinsically linked with general education discourse and they are aligned and mutually defining (Dudley-Marling, 2001).

Discourse surrounding dyslexia is shaped by a number of perspectives that come from medical, scientific psychological, legislative and professional/expert discourses (cf. Soler 2009; Campbell 2013; Reid and Weatherly-Valle 2004). Campbell (2013) argued that these discourses played a significant role, alongside the development of literacy and statistics in the Western world, in the formation of the dyslexia label. Campbell (2013) studied the medical problematisation of reading difficulties in the UK. He

[2] Translated from French interview 'Je suis un artificer' accessed online

uses the example of dyslexia to investigate how a diagnostic label is formed through discourse and how diagnostic discourses are legitimised in legislation and in society as a whole. Campbell (2013) used a Foucauldian genealogy to trace the diagnostic label of dyslexia through history. In other words, he looked at the forces (political, economic, technical and social) that facilitated the development of the diagnostic label of dyslexia. He argues that any diagnostic or impairment category can be seen as a technology of power. Foucault uses the term *technology* in order to refer to the ways in which power operates (Behrent, 2013). Indeed Foucault discusses two mechanisms of technologies: the first refers to the way society dominates, pacifies and regulates subjects, the second refers to what Foucault termed 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1985) and is concerned with how subjects form themselves as subjects (Foucault, 1985, p. 6). In other words, how subjects shape their own bodies and thoughts (Danaher et al., 2012) by resisting dominant forces.

3.3 Normalisation, literacy, and dyslexia

According to Foucault (1982a, p. 214), normalisation 'categorises the individual, marks him [sic] by his own individuality, attaches to him his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise and others have to recognise for him'. Consequently, normalisation becomes a discursive dividing practice which divides the 'normal' from the 'deviant'. Within education, this dividing practice and the dominant discourse of 'normalcy' is accepted using the commonplace language of 'special needs' (Aspis, 1999). In other words, normalisation results in the 'othering' of children. This is evident from the perspective of Graham and Slee (2008, p. 282) who argue that normalising discourses are drawn as poles of division, with affirming statements of the desirable normal subject contrasted with statements of 'deficit, conceptualisations of the other than normal [and] discourses that demarcate the abnormal object'. These deficit discourses include words like 'disabled', 'disruptive', 'disordered', 'at risk' and 'disadvantaged' (Graham & Slee, 2008). This thesis is concerned with how

dominant media discourses construct the dyslexic subject. In terms of normalisation, this raises the question of the extent to which the dyslexic subject is 'othered' against the 'normal' subject within media discourse. Importantly, the media as a technology of power has the ability to define what is normal and thus operates as a normalising power within today's society. Therefore, the way in which the media construct the dyslexic identity is important in terms of normalisation because it will highlight how the media portray the concept of 'normal' and how they construct the 'other'.

Ball (2013b) and Campbell (2013) link normalisation with the tendency to measure and account for the population as a whole using social statistics and statistical techniques. Ball (2013b, p. 62) argues that these statistics 'provided the language and a set of concepts which served to distribute a population along the lines of the curve, that defines population norms and desirable traits, and creates a system of normalisation.' In other words, these statistics establish a norm by which to measure the population against. In terms of education and literacy, any child who does not develop literacy skills at the 'normal' rate is 'othered' even before the label of dyslexia is applied. This othering takes the form of specialised intervention to help the child acquire the necessary literacy skills to succeed in education but also catch up with their normally developing peers. 'The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize' (Foucault, 2004b, p. 253). This quote can be applied to how statistical measures define population norms, desirable traits and creates a system of normalisation. For those children who do not meet the required standard in education (often set by central government in the UK) in terms of behaviour or academic ability and/or achievement are classified as 'deviant' or 'abnormal' and are assigned the category of having 'special educational needs' which results in further surveillance and assessment. This continued judgement of children is what Foucault (1975a) termed 'discipline normalisation'. Foucault (1978, p. 139) would also argue that this link between normalisation and statistics is an example of biopower and biopolitics. Bio-power is a modality of power that is exercised through our

relationship to demography: ‘power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population’. The government record, control and predict the population’s demographics (bio-politics). Bio-power can shape how we think of ourselves in relation to population factors such as birth, death, sickness, and other demographics. In other words, it can shape our subjectivity about ourselves.

In the UK, the national curriculum standardises education nationally so that all pupils are offered the same core content wherever they are being educated. Ball (1993) argues that this has led to an emphasis on comparisons on performance between students. He coins the term performativity to describe this process. ‘Performativity is a culture or a system of ‘terror’. It is a regime of accountability that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change’ (Ball, 2013a, p. 57). Importantly for children with dyslexia or any other SEN, this performativity represents a worth or value of an individual within the education system. Within the educational context, this places less value on students with SEN who are less able to perform when compared with peers or the standardised norms present within education where there is a dominant discourse of normalcy (along with a dominant discourse of neoliberalism - see glossary for definition of neoliberalism). Furthermore, children are constantly quantified, classified and labelled within the education system using a distribution statistical norm which allows for the comparison of performance and ability of individual students. Indeed, Foucault (1977c, p. 304) argued that ‘distribution, surveillance, [and] observation’ are ‘the greatest support…of normalising power’. Regarding dyslexia and normalisation, children are measured against literacy norms (usually though standardised testing) and deficits are identified in those children who fall below the deemed standard. These children are then subjected to additional surveillance and testing to reach a diagnosis. Once diagnosed with dyslexia, an intervention programme is developed by a team of specialists (often a combination of dyslexia specialists, educational psychologists, school SENCOs, class teachers and occupational therapists) to manage this deficit

and help the child achieve ‘normal’ literacy levels. This produces a ‘discourse of professionalism’ (Fulcher, 2015) which aims to normalise these students through ‘expert intervention and remedy’ (Liasidou, 2008, p. 492). That is not to say that without standardisation and observation that the problem of some children facing difficulties with literacy would be resolved. Rather, standardisation and observation contribute to the ‘othering’ of these children by constant comparison to the norm. Indeed, Allan (1996, 1999) studied pupils’ discourse within a mainstream school environment with regards to their special needs. One of her findings was that SEN children in UK schools were subject to constant surveillance in mainstream classrooms. One of the techniques of surveillance noted by Allan was normalising judgements where children with SEN are ‘defined in relation to normality’ with their SEN label distinguishing them ‘clearly from ‘normal’ pupils’ (Allan, 1996, pp. 222-223).

The dominant discourse of literacy in the UK (and other Western countries) is apparent within education and society where there are world rankings for literacy rates (UNICEF, 2016). Collinson and Penketh (2010, p. 10) found that official forms of knowledge (such as assessments and psychological reports) act as ‘instruments of normalisation’ and that when individuals are measured against literate norms, they ‘are ‘treated’ in order to manage what is perceived as a deficit’. In their study they explored the personal narratives of six postgraduate academics with dyslexia and found both positive and negative learning experiences, with early experiences of formal education that related to literacy-based learning being described as negative experiences. However, there were ‘stories of resistance’ within the narratives (Collinson & Penketh, 2010, p. 14). This is unsurprising because as Foucault (1981, pp. 94-95) argues ‘where there is power there is resistance…one is always ‘inside’ power, there is no escaping it, there is no absolute outside where it is concerned.’ Indeed, Foucault argues that power can be resisted and that power relations can be both coercive and productive (Foucault, 1980). Furthermore, Foucault (1980) argues that power can only operate when people have freedom because power never allows total control and

constantly produces resistances. The students in the Collinson and Penketh (2010) study resisted their former exclusion within formal education was to re-enter education as mature learners and gain tertiary qualifications which resulted in them being considered academically successful. A recurrent narrative found in the study was ‘resistance through persistence’ (Collinson & Penketh, 2010, p. 15) which applied to all participants in the study. The dominant discourse of literacy in relation to dyslexia is developed further in chapter four where literacy, dyslexia and the dyslexic identity are discussed at length.

Campbell (2013) argues that impairment categories, such as dyslexia, are a technology of power because of the ways in which labels and medical categories are used by ‘public bodies to differentiate, sort and act upon people’ (Campbell, 2013, p. 224). When an individual is identified as dyslexic this also serves as a way of differentiating a people (a population of dyslexics) from the norm. Therefore, the norm can also be seen as a technology of power. ‘Dyslexia is positioned as a technology of power that is dependent upon the norm as it identifies those who deviate negatively from accepted standards of literacy’ (Campbell, 2013, p. 16). In this way the norm functions as a benchmark and all bodies are measured and understood in terms of the extent to which they deviate from the norm. As (Ewald, 1990, p. 154) argues:

> The norm is equalizing; it makes each individual comparable to all others; it provides the standard of measurement. Essentially, we are all alike and, if not altogether interchangeable, at least similar, never different enough from one another to imagine ourselves as entirely apart from the rest. If the establishment of norms implies classification, this is primarily because the norms creates classes of equivalency. (Ewald, 1990: 154)

Indeed, the dominant visual theme of dyslexics found in the study by Collinson, Dunne, and Woolhouse (2012), was dyslexics accepting assistance from the teacher, portraying the dyslexic learner as ‘powerless’

(Collinson et al., 2012, p. 864). Additionally, the images in the study suggest that they form the 'dominant construct of normality' and portray disability as 'difference as problem' (Collinson et al., 2012, p. 870). However, for some students there is value in the label 'dyslexia'. Indeed, Cameron and Billington (2015) who used focus groups to investigate the ways in which dyslexic university students constructed the concept of dyslexia, found that 'without the label, the same problems become morally unacceptable 'character defects' (Cameron & Billington, 2015, p. 1234). This concurs with Gibbs and Elliott (2010, p. 298) who argue that having a diagnosis of dyslexia is, in some cases, is desirable and the label itself becomes 'cherished'. Furthermore, authors such as Goffman (1963) and Campbell (2013) argue that dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, which are 'hidden' disabilities, are often less stigmatised and thus are more socially acceptable, especially when compared to the alternative which Stanovich (1988) termed the 'garden variety poor reader'. In other words, it seems that to be labelled a poor reader is less socially accepted than being labelled dyslexic. However, stigma can still occur without the label; Riddick (1995, 2010) found that the majority of children in her study reported that other children were aware of the fact that they struggled with their work and as a result they often felt stigmatised by other children due to visible signs like poor spelling and not because of the label dyslexia.

According to Hacking (1990, p. 160), the word normal 'uses power as old as Aristotle to bridge the fact/value distinction, whispering in your ear that what is normal is also right.' Foucault (1977b) discusses normalisation in terms of disciplinary power in *Discipline and Punish.* He uses the panopticon prison designed by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham to illustrate the invisible watchman of society. The panopticon is circular with the guard station at the centre. The guard can see all the prisoners from his station, but the prisoners cannot see the guard. Therefore, the prisoners do not know whether or not they are being watched. When this idea is applied to normalisation and subjects within society it can be seen that people behave in certain ways whether or not they are being watched; they self-discipline.

Social norms act as social conditioning tools in this way. In other words, norms define acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, they affirm or negate ways of being. This leads to the threat of being judged 'abnormal' which constrains behaviour. Therefore, norms (and thus normalising judgement) are a pervasive means of control which are produced through technologies of power such as schools, the government and the media. Society becomes a normalising society (Foucault, 2004b, p. 253). The next section will explore the theme of power and discuss normalisation and power in more detail.

3.4 Foucauldian Power

> Power is not something that is acquired seized or shared, something that one holds onto or allows to slip away, power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relationship (Foucault, 1981, p. 94)

As the quote above demonstrates, Foucault's concept of power is rather different to that of other theorists concerned with power, such as Weber (1948), Marx (1974, 1978) and Marx and Engels (1950) who see power as concentrated in the hands of the minority and is used as a form of oppression. For example, Marx and Engels (1950) argue that the ruling class uses their power to exploit the subordinate classes. Whereas Foucault does not claim that there is a single centre of power that is used as a form of oppression over a population. In fact, Foucault argues that power is everywhere, that it is exercised rather than possessed and it is not about domination. In other words, power is not just about repression nor is it always negative. Indeed, Foucault argues that power can be resisted and that power relations can be both coercive and productive (Foucault, 1980). Furthermore, Foucault argues that power can only operate when people have freedom because power never allows total control and constantly produces resistances. For Foucault, power:

> traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a

> productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).

Foucault argues that there are four modalities of power:

1. **Sovereign power** which operated in medieval times whereby a king had complete control over the population.
2. **Disciplinary power** which is the power which we exercise over others as well over ourselves through normalisation. It is exercised through surveillance and knowledge.
3. **Pastoral Power** which again operates in a democracy and derives from Christianity. This is the kindly exercise of power or the 'caring mode' of power (Fendler, 2010, p. 46).
4. **Bio-power** which is concerned with how democracies handle birth, deaths, illness, and demographics such as race and gender. Bio-power shapes how we think of ourselves in terms of these demographics. 'Bio-power analyses, regulates, controls, explains and defines the human subject, its body and behaviour' (Danaher et al., 2012, p. xviii).

This thesis is primarily concerned with his ideas on disciplinary power and bio-power. His main work concerning disciplinary power is *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977b) where he examines how technologies of power are used to confine and constrain individuals through the use of torture, punishment and discipline.

In *Discipline and punish*, Foucault (1977b) uses the prison to describe how new kinds of subjects are formed. These subjects are described as docile and conform to a disciplinary society which is enforced through schools, prisons and the workplace in modern society. Foucault (1977b, pp. 149-169) argues that there are four key mechanisms involved in a disciplinary society. First, the art of distributions which refers to how space is used to enclose, and partition subjects. Foucault illustrates this form of disciplinary power with

an example of a naval hospital. He discusses how commodities were prioritised over patients and as a consequence how patients were regulated and forced to stay within their wards so that they could be registered and accounted for. Foucault (1977b, p. 144) notes how this process 'tended to individualise bodies, diseases, symptoms, lives and deaths…Out of discipline, a medically useful space was born'. The second mechanism of disciplinary power is the control of activity. He discusses how the school timetable serves to control and monitor students within a school. The third mechanism is the organisation of geneses which is concerned with how time is organised and monitored. Finally, the composition of forces is the fourth mechanism of a disciplinary society. This is concerned with maximising the productive effects of people using tactics. 'Tactics, the art of constructing, with located bodies, coded activities and trained aptitudes, mechanisms in which the product of the various forces is increased by their calculated combination are no doubt the highest form of disciplinary practice' (Foucault, 1977b, p. 167). The function of these four mechanisms of disciplinary power is to train members of society and 'make' individuals. Indeed, it creates new kinds of subjects: docile bodies. However, disciplinary power depends on the success of the techniques of hierarchal observation, normalising judgement, and the examination (which combines hierarchal observation and normalising judgement). Foucault combines these techniques to refer to them as the 'means of correct training' (Foucault, 1977b, p. 170). Hierarchal observation makes subjects visible through constant observation. Normalising judgement is the micromanagement of the behaviour of subjects. It constantly compares and differentiates individuals from one another and introduces a 'value-giving' measure (Foucault, 1977b, p. 183) whereby people are measured and ranked by ability (this is especially evident in education and schools) which introduces conformability and the idea of 'abnormal' (normalising judgement is discussed in relation to SEN in the previous section). Examination allows subjects to be seen and is the technique of power which marks subjects and 'holds them in a mechanism of objectification' (Foucault, 1977b, p. 187). In sum, discipline creates a docile, self-monitoring person who is expected to conform to the norms of society. Thus, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* shows how power creates subjects

and subjectifies them. This theme will be explored as part of this thesis, looking at how the media act as a disciplinary power to reinforce the norms of society (i.e., how people with SEN/dyslexia are othered and classed 'abnormal').

In *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1,* Foucault explains the relationship between bio-power and normalisation:

> A power whose task is to take charge of life needs continuous regulatory and corrective mechanisms. . . Such a power has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize, rather than display itself in its murderous splendour; it does not have to draw the line that separates the enemies of the sovereign from his obedient subjects; . . . it effects distributions around the norm. . . The law operates more and more as a norm, and . . . the juridical institution is increasingly incorporated into a continuum of apparatuses (medical, administrative, and so on) whose functions are for the most part regulatory. A normalizing society is the historical out-come of a technology of power centred on life (1978, p. 144)

By adopting the position that bio-power is related to normalisation, how the dyslexic subject has been objectivised, divided and made 'other' and thus separated from the norm can be studied in the context of media and educational media discourse.

Not only does Foucault link power to normalisation but he also links power with knowledge. For Foucault, power is intrinsically linked with knowledge: 'there is no power relation without the correlated constitution of the field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations' (Foucault, 1977c, p. 27). Indeed, Foucault uses the composite term power/knowledge (*pouviour/savoir*), in many of his genealogical works, to show the linked relationship of these two terms. What Foucault meant by linking power with knowledge in this way was that knowledge, to be recognised as truth, has to come from an authoritative voice, i.e., someone with power (such as a professional (teacher, Dr) and/or

the media). Furthermore, he argued that knowledge is culturally and historically specific; what is classed as 'truth' or as knowledge changes over time and across cultures. For example, it was once believed that the world was flat or that madness was a physical disease (Foucault, 1965). Moreover, knowledge 'is produced by and for particular interests, in particular circumstances' (MacLure, 2003, p. 175). Guided by Foucault's theorisation on power/knowledge, this thesis aims to investigate whether or not media discourse surrounding dyslexia changes over time.

In Foucault's essay *The Subject and power* (1976/2000a), he discusses how power is used to create a subject. He discusses how struggles of power question the status of the individual, constrain individuality and make us question who we are. He goes onto argue that this form of power 'categorises the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognise, and others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects' (Foucault, 1976/2000a, p. 331). The struggles discussed by Foucault include against domination, against exploitation and against subjection. The struggles against subjection revolve around the rejection of subjectivity itself. One of the ways in which a person can resist subjectivation, is through transgression. According to Foucault (1994) transgression is a resistance to limits; it is a way for people with disabilities to challenge the disabling barriers they encounter and exercise control over themselves and others (Allan, 2011). Allan (1999, 2011) researched the experiences of students with special needs in mainstream education settings in the UK by using Foucauldian genealogies of power and knowledge. She found that the students were 'constrained and controlled by the discourses and practices of special education' (Allan, 2011, p. 154) and as a consequence the students with a learning disabled or learning difficulties label transgressed the disciplinary procedures of assessment and teaching practices. Allan (1999) found evidence of students both transgressing out of their disability and transgressing into their disability. In terms of students transgressing out of their disability, she discusses two children with visual

impaired identities who reject the long white cane and refuse rehabilitation training which can be seen as coercive markers of disability. The example Allan (1999) gives in relation to transgression into a disability is a girl named Susan, who uses coercive markers of disability such as her electric wheelchair to transgress into a disabled identity. Indeed, 'Susan valued such events in which her disability was given prominence' (Allan, 1999, p. 50). Although this thesis is not concerned with subjectivity in this way, it is important to note that people can reject the identity given to them by society/professionals; not all power is oppressive. There may be evidence of people rejecting/accepting their dyslexic identity within the corpus and this could be a potential area for future research. However, resistance is exceedingly difficult for subjects as it requires self-awareness, and it means putting themselves at risk because it involves going against dominant discourse and/or technologies of power.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the main Foucauldian concepts of discourse, subjectivity, normalisation and power. All of which will be used throughout this thesis, especially during the analysis of the data where these concepts will be used as a lens to interpret the data. The Foucauldian concept of power is especially important as the methodology of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis used in this study is specifically focused on power and influenced by Foucault. The power of the media to shape the identity of the dyslexic person as well as the social construction of what dyslexia means as a concept are the key research areas for this thesis. Furthermore, as previously stated all of the Foucauldian concepts outlined above are interrelated especially with Foucault's concept of power. The following chapter will discuss media and section 3.4 will discuss Foucault and media specifically.

4 Print media in the UK

Tuchman (1978, p. 1) describes media as a ‘window on the world’ and argues that news defines and shapes events by assembling and distributing knowledge. However, the concept of ‘media’ is complex as it encompasses modes of communication, media organisations, new media (internet, social media), the role of media professionals and the effects of media on audiences. Furthermore, the media is a social institution which is socially and culturally determined (J. Richardson, 2007). This chapter describes how the terms *news*, *media* and *journalism* are used in this research. It will explore how news stories can become discursive practices and look at how discourse is related to the ways in which news texts are produced and consumed. News values and what makes an event newsworthy will also be discussed, before outlining the news values which will be used in this research. The power of the media will be examined from a Foucauldian perspective, with a review of some of the related literature before discussing how Foucauldian theory will be applied to the media within this thesis. Finally, dyslexia in the media will be discussed, reviewing some of the key literature in this research area.

4.1 Defining news, journalism and the media

4.1.1 What is News?

The word news combines the word ‘new’ with ‘interesting’ as it refers to recent events which are deemed as relevant (Busa, 2014, p. 25). Simply put, news are texts which are written by journalists to report information on an event which is then communicated to a mass audience via print, broadcast or the internet. Schudson (2003, p. 14) argues that news offers ‘information and commentary on contemporary affairs to be publicly important’.

News can be categorised into two types: hard news and soft news(J. Richardson, 2007). Hard news makes up most of the news reported in newspapers. It includes reports on events which have just happened and the majority of hard news stories are concerning catastrophic or life-threatening events (wars, famines, crimes, natural disasters), or major political and economic events (Bell, 1991; Busa, 2014). It is hard news that fills the front pages of newspapers. Breaking news is also classed as hard news. Breaking news covers an unexpected event which is reported quickly as the story develops.

The style of a hard news story typically follows the 'inverted pyramid' structure whereby the most important aspects of the news story are reported first, reversing the chronological order of the events. This means that the conclusion of the story will appear first, followed by other important information and context, ending with the less important information. This structure allows the readers to gain the essential elements of a news story quickly and help them decide whether or not to continue to read the story. The average time spent reading a newspaper is around 25 minutes (Busa, 2014, p. 63). Additionally, this structure makes it easier for newspaper editors to edit news by trimming the bottom of the article to ensure it fits onto the space on the page which is at a premium in print newspapers.

Soft news is generally less immediate and focuses more on human interest news items such as arts and entertainment, celebrity stories, sports and lifestyle (Busa, 2014). Features are one of the most common types of soft news. They are generally longer than hard news items and the writers have more freedom in terms of style and structure (Bell, 1991). The vast majority of news items about dyslexia, in the corpus created as part of this thesis, are soft news in the form of features.

It is important to note that not only do some soft news stories arise from hard news stories but the distinction between hard and soft news is not clear-cut nor is it always easy to identify whether a news story is soft or hard news.

4.1.2 What is 'Media'?

Media, in some of the sociological literature, is referred to as 'mass media' which is defined as 'those agencies of communication that convey information, education, news and entertainment to mass audiences' (S. Chapman, 2013, p. 779). However, since media is not always interpreted in the same way by one large 'mass' of people, this thesis will use the term media and not mass media.

Media consists of three different types: print media, audio-visual media (TV, radio) and what media sociologists such as Gruber (2008) have termed 'new media' (technology media, including social media). This thesis is concerned with print media, particularly newspapers, and their online editions which have often been produced in print first then uploaded onto the individual newspapers' website. Print media has been chosen instead of audio-visual and new media because 'it plays an important role in shaping opinions as well as setting agendas regarding the importance of certain topics' (Baker, Gabrielatos, & McEnery, 2013, p. 2). Indeed, print media can be seen as driving the agenda whereas new media can be seen as responding to the agenda as it is a platform for the public to respond to events happening around the world. Furthermore, this study is longitudinal as it covers the time period 1975-2017, between the 1970s-1990s new media was in its early development stages and was not a big influence in society, therefore print media will give a long picture of how dyslexia and the dyslexic subject has been constructed over time; this would not be possible using new media. Additionally, print media is clearly in the public domain (which means that the ethics of using print media are much clearer) whereas new media is a grey

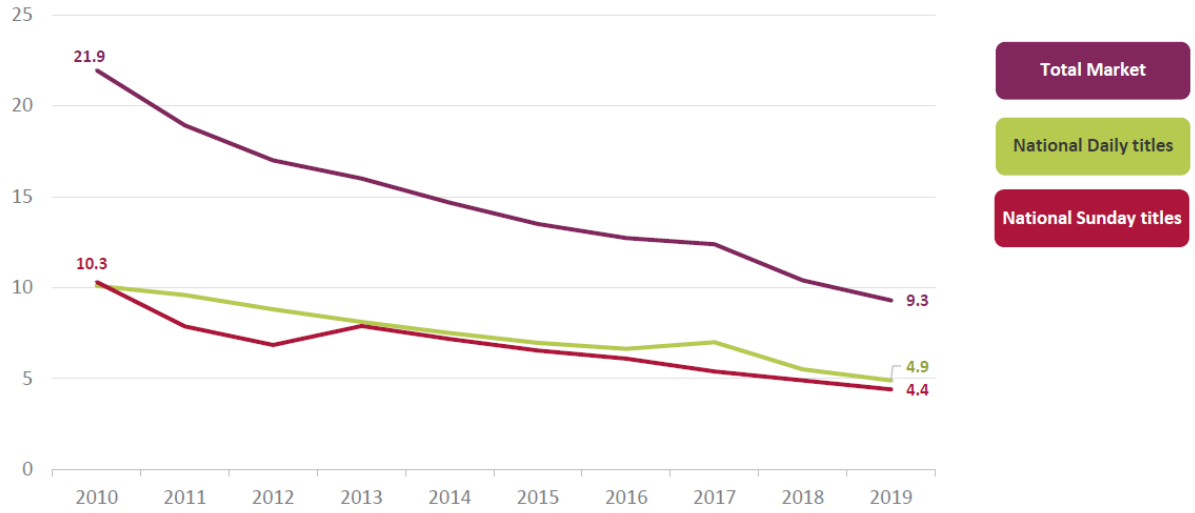
area in this respect. From a from a practical point of view, print media is easily accessible and data from a large timescale is available.

Despite the fact that overall circulation for newspapers in the UK is declining (as shown in **Figure 1** below), approximately 93% of adults (aged over 15 years) consume newsbrands daily across print and digital platforms; this equates to 49.3 million people (PAMCo, 2018). This still constitutes a high circulation and as argued by Mautner (2008, p. 32) major daily and weekly newspapers are an 'obvious source to turn to' if you are interested in dominant discourses. Furthermore, print media has a cumulative effect. In the words of Fairclough (2015, p. 54):

> The hidden power of media discourse and the capacity of…power holders to exercise this power depend on systematic tendencies in news reporting and other media activities. A single text on its own is quite insignificant: the effects of media power are cumulative, working through the repetition of particular ways of handling causality and agency, particular ways of positioning the reader, and so forth.

Figure 1: Circulation trends for national newspaper titles -2010 to 2019 (OFCOM, 2020)

Average UK net circulation (million)



As **Figure 1** demonstrates consumption of print media in the UK is declining and is still on the decline; the circulation of national newspapers fell from 22 million in 2010 to 9.3 million in 2019 (OFCOM, 2020). However, many UK newspapers also publish their editions online and are mainly free to access due to the newspapers being able to gain revenue via advertising (newspapers do not get government funding in the UK). This means that the British Press has a potential to reach readers outside of the UK, especially when considering the status of the English Language as well as the fact that the UK is a rich, culturally influential country. Conboy (2010, p. 145) argues that newspapers are adapting to the decline in the circulation of print media by incorporating their products into online formats. This is reflected in market reach figures published by PAMCo in 2018; they found that the total market reach for all published media across all platforms increased between 2017/18 from 47.2 million readers daily to 49.5 million in 2018/19[3] (PAMCo, 2018).

Data available from PAMCo (2018) show, with the exception of print media, the market reach for all other media platforms actually increased between 2017 and 2018[4]. Therefore, print and their online editions have been included in this study where available (see methodology chapter for further information).

Social media, which is known as 'new media' (S. Chapman, 2013) is a third type of mass media. It is all online and examples include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat. There are also new specialist news apps on the market including Apple News and Snapchat Discover. Additionally, voice-activated digital assistants (such as Amazon Echo and Google Assistant) are emerging as a new platform for news. However, in a YouGov survey of over 70,000 online news consumers across 36 countries

[3] Figures are from April 2017- March 2018 and April 2018 – March 2019.
[4] Print media decreased from 71% to 61%, desktop increased from 32% to 40%, phone increased from 54% to 67% and tablet increased from 18% to 20%. Raw figures from PAMCo are unavailable as data is only presented in percentages.

in 2017, it was found that the growth in using social media for news is flattening out in some markets. This could be due to the fact that only 24% of respondents thought that social media done a good job in separating fact from fiction, compared with 40% for the news media (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2017, p. 9). Nevertheless, in the UK it was found that 41%[5] of the respondents used social media for accessing news but the BBC was the top brand online as well as for TV and radio for news (Newman et al., 2017, p. 54). Furthermore, a study by OFCOM (2020) found that fewer people are now getting news from social media; this figure dropped from 49% in 2019 to 45% in 2020[6]. This study will not use social media as a source for investigation due to the reasons outlined above. This could, however, be an area for further study in the future.

This thesis also used specialist media published in the UK. This media predominately compromised educational supplements. This included the *Times Education Supplement* (TES) and The Times Higher Educational Supplement (THE) which are weekly publications published by the British newspaper publisher, *The Times.* Its target audience is education professionals in the UK, primarily teaching professionals working in primary and secondary education. Nevertheless, figure two (below) shows that TES is also read by teaching professionals in Further Education (FE), Higher Education (HE), nursery settings and by Local Education Authorities (LEAs), albeit these are in smaller numbers when compared with professionals working in the primary and secondary education sectors.

[5] A total of 2112 people were surveyed in the UK for this study.
[6] A total of 1007 people were interviewed between November 2019 and April 2020.

Figure 2: TES reader by type (TES, 2010)[7]

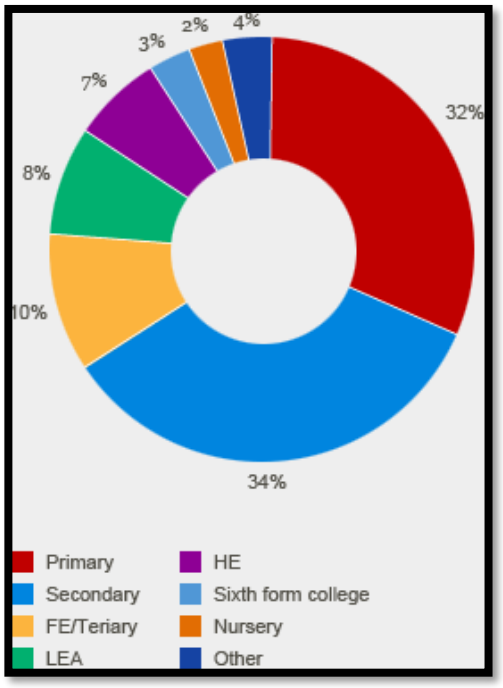


Figure 2 (above) shows the data according to the National Readership Survey. It shows that the readership figures for TES between April 2009 and March 2010 were 371,000 (TES, 2010). This means that 126,140 secondary school professionals and 118, 720 primary school professionals read TES on a weekly basis during this period.

4.1.3 What is 'Journalism'?

Journalism is defined as a process of producing news and 'journalism, in its various forms, is clearly among the most influential knowledge-producing institutions of our time' (Ekström, 2002, p. 259). Namely, the primary function of journalism is to help people understand the world around them and can be defined as the 'reporting of information about recent events through the media' (Busa, 2014, p. 25). However, it is important to note that journalism is produced by profit-making businesses who are controlled by the elite and powerful within society. Thus, from a Foucauldian perspective, journalism

[7] No up-to date figures are available

(and thus media as a whole) can be seen as a disciplinary power which enforces the norms of society and shapes knowledge, creates subjects and claims truth, whilst maintaining the interests of the powerful and elite who control media. Disciplinary power, for Foucault, is the power which we exercise over ourselves through normalisation and is exercised through surveillance and knowledge (Foucault, 1977c). Furthermore, journalism is constructed by journalists, in the words of Vasterman (1995):

> news is not out there, journalists do not report news, they produce news. They construct it, they construct facts, they construct statements and they construct a context in which these facts make sense. They reconstruct a 'reality'' cited in (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, p. 265)[8].

Indeed, 'newspapers function as more than mere 'mirrors' of reality' (Baker et al., 2013, p. 3). Rather, they construct their own versions of reality and persuade people particular events/subjects are good or bad.

J. Richardson (2007, p. 75) introduces the idea of journalistic discourse. Drawing on the work of Phillips and Jorgensen (2002), he defines journalistic discourse as the process whereby journalists produce texts and readers read and understand them. This is a two-way relationship between the producer of the text and the consumer of the text. However, when a text is consumed by readers, they have different views, perspectives, agendas and knowledge so will therefore interpret the text in different ways. In other words, journalistic discourse is always socially situated. Furthermore, it is important to consider that news is constructed by many different people (such as reporters and editors) as it is a collaborative working environment. Thus, many people will collaborate on a single item of news. Bell (1991, pp. 44-46), estimates that up to eight people may contribute to a news item in a moderate-sized press newsroom.

[8] Article published in Dutch, in magazine Massacommunicatie, September 1995.

The terms *news, media* and *journalism* are often used interchangeably and therefore have no clear boundaries between them. This is due to the terms being so closely linked together; news is created by journalists who are in the profession of journalism and both news and journalism are part of media.

4.2 News values

News values are factors which make it more likely for events to be reported in the news; it is those factors that decide what is considered to be newsworthy. Journalists use these news values to decide what to prioritise and report based on what they think an identified audience would find interesting. However, news values are not clear-cut; Hall (1973, p. 181) argues that:

> 'News values' are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify or define it.…Yet of the millions of events which occur daily in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as 'potential news stories' and of this proportion, only a small fraction are actually produced as the day's news in the news media. We appear to be dealing, then, with a 'deep structure' whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it.

Despite the opaque nature of news values, there have been studies carried out investigating what these news values could be. The most influential study was carried out by Galtung and Ruge (1965b) and was based on three international crisis (Congo 1960; Cuba 1960 and Cyprus 1964). They identified twelve news values which were: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite peoples, reference to elite nations, personification and negativity. They argued that the more news values an event had the more likely it was to be reported as news. Even though this study remains

influential, it received criticism for focusing on particular crises and ignoring everyday news (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001; Tunstall, 1971). Hartley (1982) also observed that some stories that receive a lot of coverage do not fulfil any of Galtung and Ruge's news factors. This led Harcup and O'Neill (2001) to argue that this taxonomy of news values was not a 'complete explanation of all of the irregularities of news composition, including the influence of political and economical factors' (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, pp. 265-266).

On the basis of these criticisms, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) carried out their own investigation into what makes events newsworthy, attempting to identify any of the factors outlined by Galtung and Ruge (1965). They used content analysis to investigate published news items to attempt to establish what may have led to their selection as news. They looked at a total of 1276 articles published as page leads in UK national newspapers in 1992. However, they only considered news and did not use editorials, features or readers' letters which Galtung and Ruge (1965) used in their sampling.

Harcup and O'Neill (2001, p. 277) proposed a contemporary set of ten news values. They argue that news stories must satisfy one or more of the news values to be selected as news. These contemporary news values are as follows:

1. **The power elite.** These are news items about powerful individuals, organisations or institutions. In terms of this study these include dyslexia charities, prominent academics/teaching professionals and The Department of Education.
2. **Celebrity.** News items about people who are already famous. The corpus featured articles about famous people who were dyslexic such as Richard Branson, Princess Beatrice and Tom Cruise.

3. **Entertainment.** News items about ‘sex, showbusiness, human interest, animals, an unfolding drama, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, entertaining photographs or witty headlines’ (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, p. 277). News items from the corpus under this category are mainly human-interest pieces such as people telling their stories of how they have overcome dyslexia.
4. **Surprise.** These may be stories with surprise or contrast.
5. **Bad news.** These are news items concerned with conflict or tragedy.
6. **Good news.** These are news items concerned with rescues or cures. In the corpus there are numerous news reports of claims of cures for dyslexia such as fish oils.
7. **Magnitude.** These news items generally concern a large number of people either involved or in potential impact.
8. **Relevance.** These are news items deemed to be relevant to the perceived audience.
9. **Follow-ups.** These are news items that refer to events/issues already in the news.
10. **Newspaper agenda.** These are stories which fit the agenda of the newspaper such as their political agenda.

There are, however, limitations to the approach adopted by Harcup and O'Neill (2001). These limitations include that the approach is open to subjective interpretation and looking at published news items cannot tell the researcher anything about why one story has been selected over another or which news items were rejected or not noticed by news selectors. Therefore, the news values proposed by Harcup & O’Neill are ‘tentatively proposed’ and they highlight that there are exceptions to every rule.

These news values give an indication of why some events get reported and others do not. In this study it was found that a large number of the stories on dyslexia centered around celebrities and thus had an entertainment value.

Other news items in this study centered around the power elite (see section 0).

4.3 News media and newsbrands in the UK

The UK national press can be classified according to frequency of publication, coverage, political stance and style (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008). Information about each individual newspaper included in the study can be found in appendix 1 and in the methodology chapter.

In the UK some newspapers have a more liberal or conservative leaning editorial style and readership. Indeed, a survey of eight national newspapers in the UK found that five were predominately right-wing and only two predominately left-wing (YouGov, 2017). This means that some newspapers will be more right or left leaning even though there is no official political allegiance. In Foucauldian terms, the UK media can be seen as a technology of governance which is being used by political parties to push their own agendas and achieve their own goals (e.g., political campaigns during general elections). However, in the UK media is not state controlled or sanctioned by the government so this governance is much less explicit than in other cultural contexts. UK newspapers can also have a political affiliation whereby they declare their allegiance to a particular political party. For example, The Telegraph supported the Conservative party in the 2019 general election, whereas The Daily Mirror supported the Labour party. Some newspapers, such as The Daily Star had no political affiliation in the 2019 general election. A full list of which newspapers are currently affiliated with a political party can be found in appendix 1.

Newspapers in the UK operate in a competitive market which means that people can choose not only what newspaper to buy but also where they buy it from. This means that there is competition between newspaper brands for

readers and that newspapers may compete for readers with promotions and special feature and entertaining articles. This is because newspapers are primarily businesses, they 'do not exist to report the news…they exist to make money' (Sparks, 1999, pp. 45-46). Indeed, the UK newspaper industry is controlled by only eight owners which can be classified as large media enterprises (Busa, 2014, p. 14). One such owner is Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, News Corp, who produces The Sun, The Times, The Sun on Sunday and The Sunday Times. Indeed, News Corp also has interests in the US including Fox TV. Conglomerates, like News Corp, pose the risk of lack of competition in the market and thus decrease diversity. They are powerful and influential and this has led Doyle (2002) to conclude that those who own the media have more power than those in other sectors of the industry and because of this they can shape public opinion and undermine the democratic process. Using the ideas of Foucault, the media is structured through power relations and the power of a few elite people (like Murdoch). This means that they have an influence over truth and how knowledge is being produced and normalised. Foucault (1976/2000b, p. 131) argues that truth 'is produced and transmitted under the control, dominant if not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatuses (university, army, writing, media)' and the UK media is an excellent example of this control of truth.

All British newspapers were regulated by the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) until 2014. After 2014 the PCC was taken over by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), which is the 'independent regulator for the majority of the newspaper and magazine industry in the UK' (IPSO, 2018). The IPSO has the responsibility of ensuring that all newspapers and magazines in the UK follow the editors code of practice. However, this code of practice is not a legal document but rather is a code of ethical standards which ensures that journalists do not distort information or process material which encourages discrimination, prejudice or hatred (National Union of Journalists, 2011). Therefore, there should be no evidence of any discrimination against dyslexic people in the corpus created as part of this

study. Nor should there be any other evidence of journalists going against this code of practice within their reporting on dyslexia.

The power and influence of the media in the UK has been well established within academic research. For example, studies by both Linton (1995) and McKee (1995) found that the defeat of the Labour Party in the 1992 general election could be attributed to anti-labour campaign by The Sun. More recent events such as BREXIT demonstrates the power of the media to shape ideas and influence opinion, making the media an influential technology of power (this is discussed further in the section below). During the referendum on the UK's position to remain or leave in the EU, newspapers campaigned strongly and coined the term 'BREXIT' to dignify their campaign position to support a leave vote. The Mail, Sun and Express newspapers ran anti-European Union slogans and articles, many of which contained 'half-truths and outright lies' in a 'ferocious propaganda campaign' (Barnett, 2016). This campaign was successful in persuading voters to leave the EU. Indeed, the editor of the Sun newspaper commented 'so much for the waning power of the print media' (Seaton, 2016). In the context of this thesis, the construction of dyslexia is the major focus. The media plays a significant role in the way it constructs the concept of dyslexia and thus has the power to influence the views of both the general public and educational professionals.

4.4 Foucault and the media

The power of media is an important aspect of this thesis as it aims to investigate both how media discursively construct the concept of dyslexia as well as how media shapes and positions the dyslexic subject within society. Indeed, in terms of this thesis, media can be regarded as a technology of power. Technologies, from a Foucauldian perspective are mechanisms of disciplinary power whereby power is exercised over others as well as over oneself. Adopting the Foucauldian concept of disciplinary power, media is examined in the way it shapes knowledge, creates subjects and claims truth

(Danaher et al., 2012). This section will outline how media will be viewed using a Foucauldian lens. First, an outline of how Foucault has been positioned in the literature concerning media will be provided. However, it is important to note that the application of Foucauldian concepts in media studies is a rather unexplored topic with few 'seeking to apply his concepts of "discourse" and "knowledge/power" to this pervasive sociocultural institution' (Hobbs, 2008, p. 2).

When investigating the media from a Foucauldian perspective, the role of media in determining the 'truth' has emerged as a theme among the literature (Hobbs, 2008; Macdonald, 2003; Packer, 2013; Qazi & Shah, 2017). What Foucault was concerned with in regard to truth, was what exactly constituted the truth and how some paradigms/beliefs become accepted as truth, while others do not. In the words of Foucault:

> Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth— that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements; the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault, 1976/2000b, p. 131)

In other words, truth is linked with systems of power which produce and sustain what is accepted as truth and knowledge in society. For Foucault, power is intrinsically linked with knowledge: 'there is no power relation without the correlated constitution of the field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations' (Foucault, 1977c, p. 27). What Foucault meant by linking power with knowledge in this way was that knowledge is produced within power struggles; there are numerous networks of power and games of truth

involved in what becomes knowledge. Thus, knowledge is created by complex interactions among competing powerful bodies.

Furthermore, he argued that knowledge is culturally and historically specific; what is classed as 'truth' or as knowledge changes over time and across cultures. For example, it was once believed that the world was flat or that madness was a physical disease (Foucault, 1965). Moreover, knowledge 'is produced by and for particular interests, in particular circumstances' (MacLure, 2003, p. 175). Thus, as can be seen by the argument above, the Foucauldian concepts of "truth", "power" and "knowledge" are intrinsically linked.

Media play an important role in establishing what is 'true' when circulating knowledge and thus truth with the use of narrative. This is carried out using recurring contents, symbols and strategies which lead to the solidification of knowledge and truth. One of these strategies is to use the constant repetition of statements to produce knowledge and establish truths. Indeed, Packer (2013, p. 10) argues that media are constantly involved in 'games of truth' and that 'the world has become representable and knowable through media technologies' (Packer, 2013, p. 14). Meaning is constantly being produced and circulated between different cultures on a large scale through the use of media (Hall, 1997). In this way, media can also be seen to interrogate truth claims and expose deceits. This has led Danaher, Schirato, and Webb (2000, p. 42) to argue that media takes on the role of a 'public watchdog' who is committed to 'an examination of other public institutions.' However, it could be argued that the journalists themselves are created by discourse and even though they can only make 'tentative claims to the truth' (Hobbs, 2008, pp. 11-12), they are groups of individuals which have been given the authority to make truth claims regarding, in the case of this thesis, dyslexia. Guided by Foucault's theorisation on power/knowledge and truth, this thesis aims to investigate what 'truths' media (and journalists) claim about dyslexia as well as how media socially construct the dyslexic subject.

By applying the works of Foucault and thus investigating power and subjectification in the media, Packer (2013, pp. 10-11) argues that 'our understanding of the relationship between subject formation and media would become richer and more complex'. One such study that investigated media discourse and subjectivity was carried out by Iyer (2009) who uses Foucault's argument that governance subjugates people as well as regulates the conduct of others and it is through this subjugation that media are able to control and shape representations and subjects. Indeed, Iyer (2009) in her study of entrepreneurial identities, found that discourses in media disempower women but the discourse of entrepreneurship make it possible for the Indian women in the study to govern themselves in order to shape their own identities by mapping new subjectivities and transgressing from the 'dominant constructions of identity that occur through discourses of patriarchy and femininity' (Iyer, 2009, p. 244) which are resisted by the women.

The work of Ian Hacking, who looks at the ways in which people are normalised within society (Hacking, 1995a, 1995b, 2006), can be related to Foucault's theorisation on subjectivity. Although, Hacking does not look at the role of media in particular, his theories can be applied to the ways in which media classify certain people, such as those with dyslexia or other disabilities. Like Foucault, Hacking discusses the importance of the role of knowledge in making up the identities of people. He argues:

> knowledge, or at any rate what is experienced as knowledge at some time, is of two kinds that shade into each other. There is expert knowledge, the knowledge of the professionals, and there is popular knowledge that is shared by a significant part of the population (Hacking, 2006, p. 297)

It is through this knowledge that classifications of people are made and media play a significant role in disseminating knowledge and constructing these classifications of people. Hacking (1995a, 1995b, 2006) describes the phenomenon of what he calls 'the looping effects of human kinds' whereby

the classification of an individual (or group of people) affects the behaviour of those who are classified; they begin to act how they are described, changing their self-conceptions and behaviours. This can be related to Foucault's concept of power and the way in which it operates through discourse. Discourse will produce, classify and confirm certain types of subjects. Discourse is central to the way in which the dyslexic subject has developed over time. This argument will be discussed further in the following chapter whereby key research literature will be examined with regards to Foucault and dyslexia. Academic research on dyslexia in the media will also be discussed within the following section.

4.5 Dyslexia and the media

In 1966 *Time* magazine in the US printed an article titled 'Reading: Some Johnnies just can't' (Rome, 1966). The Orton Society's President (now the International Dyslexia Association) responded to this article by writing to the editors of the magazine, these were then subsequently published just over a week later. As a result of these letters everyone who had been mentioned in these articles received a deluge of mail. This example shows that print media have been reporting on dyslexia for a long time (Rome, 1966). Furthermore, the reaction from the general public and professionals working with people with dyslexia, indicates that (at least at this time) lay people as well as professionals were not only gaining information about dyslexia from media, but also reacting to what was printed in media about dyslexia. This is of high importance to this study as there has been little research carried out which investigates how the media construct dyslexia and people with dyslexia. Indeed, there has been no research conducted which investigates the social construction of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. One of the reasons for the limited research in this area could be because a lot of the research carried out on dyslexia has been carried out from the perspective of school and cognitive psychology which results in much research being carried out on learning to read, write and spell (Riddick, 2010).

The gifted dyslexic

A handful of researchers have discussed (albeit very briefly) the role media can play in relation to the concept of dyslexia. For example, Elliott and Grigorenko (2014, p. 24) argue that media often make frequent references to people with dyslexia who are considered to be gifted (e.g. Albert Einstein, Richard Branson, Thomas Edison) and this fuels the perception that people with dyslexia are of high intelligence. Indeed, Stanovich (1994, p. 588), discusses the 'media dyslexic' who is 'almost always a very bright child' and this contributes to the myth that 'dyslexia is the affliction of geniuses'. An example of this can be found in newspaper articles as recent as 2017 (e.g. Sabur 2017), where Albert Einstein is described as being dyslexic. This is despite research by M. Thomas (2000) who found that there was no evidence to support this claim. Furthermore, Riddick (2010) found that the common misunderstanding that to be dyslexic you have to have a high IQ, was common among parents and attributed this finding to the influence of media repeatedly making references to gifted dyslexics.

From a different perspective, Collinson (2016, pp. 63-64) argues that famous dyslexics are a form of identity creation which actively resists elite groups, such as educationalists and psychologists, 'by rejecting the concept of the dyslexic as inferior' and 'conforming to normative views of literacy by accepting the dyslexic as somehow biologically different'. This type of identity creation is a form of reducing the stigma related to poor literacy skills; it can be seen as a coping mechanism.

Dyslexic role models within media can be another way to reduce stigma. Famous dyslexic role models are very prominent in media. For example, a new charity called Made by Dyslexia who are 'led by successful (and famous) dyslexics' (Made by Dyslexia, 2017) cite many famous dyslexic people such as Richard Branson, Jamie Oliver and Kiera Knightley on their website and these are portrayed as role models for dyslexic people. All of

these famous people appear quite prominently in the corpus designed for this study. Furthermore, the empirical study carried out by Riddick (2010) found that Einstein as well as Michael Heseltine were among the role models named by the children with dyslexia in her study. The other role models were celebrities such as Duncan Goodhew (Olympic swimmer) and Tom Cruise (film star) who the children used as a defence mechanism to cope with school life (Riddick, 2010, p. 155). What is interesting about this finding for this study is how people in the public eye have become role models for children with dyslexia and it raises the question of how discourse around dyslexia in media is constructed and whether or not it is constructed in such a way that it enables identity creation for people with dyslexia.

Further studies have also highlighted what is known as the 'dyslexic advantage' (Dyslexic advantage, 2015; Eide & Eide, 2012) which is the association between dyslexia and creativity often portrayed in books, films and celebrity news stories. The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity (2018) additionally found that there was an overrepresentation of people with dyslexia in high-status professions. This links in with the fact that dyslexia has been discursively linked with entrepreneurship, creative genius, and above-average intelligence (Eide & Eide, 2012) which Gabriel (2018, p. 3) argues helps to construct dyslexic people as 'exceptional members of society who deserve the support of public policies'.

Riddick (2010) conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with children aged between 8 and 16 years, mothers and specialist teachers. During this study she investigated sources of information that these participants had used to gain information about dyslexia. She found most of the mothers in the study had used a form of media to initially find information on dyslexia, before looking at other sources of information such as books or pamphlets from specialist organisations. Riddick (2010, p. 83) states that 'a common pattern was for a mother to first read an article or hear a programme about dyslexia and to think that their child fitted well with the difficulties that her child was

experiencing.' Additionally, many mothers had commented on the increasing coverage of dyslexia in media. Although only 24 mothers were interviewed for this study, these findings indicate that many parents who suspect that their child may have dyslexia are gaining their knowledge about dyslexia from media sourcesThis is important for this study because there is limited research which investigates how media are constructing the concept of dyslexia. Thus, this study aims to address this gap.

4.6 Summary

Newspapers are 'the ideal sites where the incremental effect of discourse can take place. A negative or ambiguous word, phrase or association may not amount to much on its own, but if similar sediments appear on a regular basis, then the discourse will become more powerful, penetrating into society's subconscious as the given way of thinking' (Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008). Therefore, newspaper reporting has a cumulative effect as many people will purchase the same newspaper every day. With this consideration, print media in the UK has been chosen as a site of investigation for the construction of narratives concerning dyslexia. This chapter has explained how this thesis will define the important concepts of news, the media and journalism. It has discussed what makes a discursive event newsworthy and has outlined the news values which will be used in the FDA element of this study. Finally, this chapter discussed how the work of French philosopher, Michel Foucault will be used in relation to the media. The following chapter will discuss the methodological approach used in this study.

5. Methodological Approach

This chapter explains the theoretical underpinnings and rationale for the research methodology employed in this study. It provides an explanation of the Corpus Linguistic approach used and includes a description of the specific research design of this thesis. A discussion of how Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) has been applied to the data produced in this thesis is also provided. Additionally, an explanation of how the data has been collected and collated into a corpus and two sub-corpora will be discussed. Finally, the methods of analysis and ethical considerations with the research design and implementation will be outlined.

5.1 Corpus Linguistics (CL)

To establish patterns in the ways in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject has been constructed, a corpus linguistics approach was used as a method. This section will define a corpus and discuss the limitations of using corpus linguistics in this type of study.

5.1.1 A definition of a corpus and corpus linguistics

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a corpus as a ‘body of written or spoken material upon which a linguistic analysis is based’ (OED, 2017). The word ‘corpus’ (the plural form is ‘corpora’) etymologically comes from Latin and means ‘body.

There are many different types of corpora such as general corpora (e.g., the British National Corpus), multilingual corpora, learner corpora, reference corpora, specialist corpora, monitor corpora and historical corpora. This study will be using a specialised corpus. A specialised corpus will have ‘clear

restrictions placed on texts that can be included within them' (Baker, 2010b, p. 14). A specialised corpus is used to investigate aspects of a particular genre, time, or place. This is a more selective approach to choosing texts which are to form the basis of the corpus. Also with this approach, the quality of the texts is equal or has more precedence over the quantity of texts within the corpus (Baker, 2006b). The corpora which will be constructed as part of this thesis will have restrictions such as time (1975-2017), place (UK), genre (newspaper articles) and topic (dyslexia). Further details on how this specialised corpus will be constructed can be found in section 5.4.4.

Corpus linguistics is 'the study of language based on examples of real life language use' (McEnery & Wilson, 1996, p. 1). Corpus linguistics is not an independent branch of linguistics (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006, p. 7) and currently there is disagreement about whether corpus linguistics (henceforth CL) is a methodology or a theory of language or both. However, many linguists who employ CL agree that 'corpus linguistics goes well beyond this purely methodological role' (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001, p. 1), although CL methodologies are not uniform.

CL is the analysis of language in use; using the terms by De Saussure (2011) an individual text can be seen as an example of *parole* (speech) and a corpus of texts (or speech events) can be seen as an example of *langue* (language) or patterns of language. In other words, CL can be used to analyse patterns of discourse over a large dataset through the use of wordlists, concordances and keyword searches. Tognini-Bonelli (2001, p. 4) argues that 'frequency of occurrence is indicative of frequency of use and thus gives a good basis for evaluating the profile of a specific word, structure or expression in relation to a norm.' Therefore, due to the large data set, the use CL in this study will allow me to gain knowledge and insight into what words and meanings are most often associated with dyslexia in both specialist and non-specialist media in the UK.

Within a corpus, the large quantities of data which are encoded electronically allow for complex statistical analysis which reveals linguistic patterns and frequency information (Baker, 2006b). Therefore, as a method CL on first impressions seems to be a more quantitative approach. However, CL is also qualitative in nature due to concordance data. Concordance data is ‘a list of all of the occurrences of a particular search term, presented within the context that they occur in’ (Baker, 2006b, p. 71). Concordance data can generate quantitative data in the form of word frequencies but can also reveal repeated discourse associated with a particular key word such as dyslexia (e.g., failure or difficulty in learning to read). Additionally, it can give the researcher qualitative evidence of semantic preference and prosody which can both show social issues that a particular word/phrase is associated with within the corpus (Mautner, 2016). Further detail on how concordance data will be used in this thesis can be found in section 5.5.1.

A corpus-driven approach (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001) will be used for this study. It is an inductive process and is known as a bottom-up approach because the data is the starting point of any analysis and thus the research is driven by the corpora. In a corpus-driven approach the main commitment of the researcher is ‘to the integrity of the data as a whole, and descriptions aim to be comprehensive with respect to corpus evidence’ (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001, p. 84). This approach not only potentially limits researcher bias but also ensures replicability of method. By employing a CL approach to data analysis, there is a high degree of objectivity as the texts are viewed without the influence of the preconceived notions of the researcher. This is contrasted with other methods such as Critical Discourse Analysis which is often criticised for selecting texts for analysis that are often not ‘typical’ but instead represent something that has interested the researcher Koller and Mautner (2004).

Another advantage of the large amounts of data produced by this method is that it is not only more creditable but it also has the potential of uncovering

rare instances of language use which may go unnoticed by researchers employing different methods (Baker et al., 2013). CL can also uncover evidence of entrenched thinking which is of importance in this study because I am wishing to investigate the social construction of dyslexia over time.

5.1.2 Mediating the limitations of corpus linguistics

Despite the many advantages of employing a CL assisted study, like all methodologies, CL does have limitations. One of the main proponents against CL is Chomsky who states:

> Any natural corpus will be skewed. Some sentences will not occur because they are obvious, others because they are false, still others because they are impolite. The corpus, if natural, will be so wildly skewed that the description would be no more than a mere list (Chomsky, 1962, p. 159).

In other words, Chomsky is arguing that in a sample of language, rare constructions may occur more frequently leading to incorrect conclusions about language variety and use. This is because no corpus can fully represent language and is thus incomplete. This can lead to a skewed corpus which, Chomsky argues due to chance, may include more rare constructions and less common constructions than what would appear in the language variety as a whole. One way of addressing this concern is to ensure that the corpora constructed are representative of the discourse under investigation. Indeed, representativeness in CL remains a key issue. As McEnery and Wilson (2003, p. 78) argue, a large corpus does not guarantee representativeness. One way to enhance representativeness in a corpus is to use dispersion statistics. Dispersion is ‘a measure of how evenly distributed the occurrence of a feature is in a text or corpus’ (McEnery & Wilson, 2003, pp. 80-81). In other words, a dispersion statistic can inform the researcher of how typical a word is in a corpus as well as how frequent it occurs. Another way to combat issues of representativeness is to ensure that the sample of texts which make up the corpora are representative of the population that they are taken from. In terms of this thesis, all of the national

newspapers from the UK are included in the study and thus the population of newspapers are being used and not a sample.

Another criticism of CL comes from Wodak (2007) who argues that pragmatic devices (e.g. insinuations, wordplay presuppositions, implicatures) and concepts cannot be analysed easily using corpus linguistics. This is an important consideration for this research as the concept of dyslexia and how it is socially constructed and how it is used to shape the identities of the person with dyslexia is a vital part of this research. Therefore, to address this issue, examples from the original articles will be analysed rather than just analysing the decontextualised wordlists produced in CL analysis. Concordance data which uses the data in context will be used at all levels of analysis (see section 5.5).

5.1 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

To establish how the media shapes the identity of a person with dyslexia, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (henceforth FDA) was employed as a method. This section will critically explore what FDA is and how it has been used in this study, discussing the strengths and limitations of FDA as a method. Additionally, the reasoning behind the choice of FDA for this study will be explored

5.1.1 A definition of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

FDA is a method of analysis which is based on the ideas of the French philosopher Michel Foucault and other post structuralist thinkers such as Barthes, Lyotard and Derrida (Graham, 2011). In comparison to the CL method also employed within this thesis, FDA takes a macro approach to analysis focusing on broader issues that relate to power and knowledge through discourse.

As a method FDA tends not to be an integrated field, meaning that there is no standard way to carry out FDA (Raaper, 2016). This is because Foucault did not want to create a school of thought or a prescriptive methodology (Andersen, 2003) but rather Foucault described his work as 'little toolboxes'. He states:

> I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area… I write for users, not readers (Foucault, 1974, pp. 523-524).

This means that FDA can be applied and interpreted in many ways. Indeed, discourse analysis is positioned as a 'craft skill' (Potter, 1996, p. 140) and is presented as a skill that is acquired by doing and practice (Waitt, 2005). This makes FDA as a methodology more implicit than explicit. However, the use of frameworks based on FDA (Bourke & Lidstone, 2015; G. Rose, 2001; Willig, 2001) can make FDA a more explicit methodology.

Foucault's concept of discourse is central to any application of FDA. Foucauldian discourse describes ideas and statements which allow us to make sense of things, knowledge and truth. It is a social process which produces meaning. Foucault (1972a, p. 8) examined discourse on three levels:

> Sometimes…the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements

As the quote above demonstrates, FDA involves the analysis of statements in which statements constitute events where subject positions and concepts are formed. Indeed, FDA can be conceptualised as focusing on how particular ideas are presented as 'truth' (Waitt, 2005); discourse governs how a topic can be meaningfully constructed and can refer to the way people

respond to a particular way of thinking (Foucault, 1972a). Discourse can therefore be used to regulate the lives of people.

FDA primarily draws on the two discourse theories employed by Foucault throughout his work. The first being archaeology which Foucault applied in this early works The Order of Things (1966) and Madness and Civilization (1965). Whereas The Archaeology of Knowledge (1972a) stands as a methodological companion to these two earlier works. Archaeology as a method provides the foundation for FDA (Andersen, 2003) as Foucault describes and defines discourse and discursive formation during these earlier works. Foucault (1998) in an interview that appeared in French in 1966, which was after the publication of Madness and Civilization, the Birth of the Clinic, and the Order of Things, but before the Archaeology of Knowledge, he explained how he defined archaeology:

> By "archaeology" I would like to designate not exactly a discipline but a domain of research, which would be the following: in a society, different bodies of learning, philosophical ideas, everyday opinions, but also institutions, commercial practices and police activities, mores - all refer to a certain implicit knowledge *[savoir]* special to this society. This knowledge is profoundly different from the bodies of learning *[des connaissances]* that one can find in scientific books, philosophical theories, and religious justifications, but it is what makes possible at a given moment the appearance of a theory, an opinion, a practice (Foucault, 1998, p. 261)

The quote above highlights Foucault's focus on knowledge and how it is produced within society. Knowledge does not just emerge in society but rather it is constructed and can often be implicit.

The second discourse theory is genealogy which was applied to the later works Discipline and Punish (1977c) and The History of Sexuality (1981). Genealogy investigates how an object has been constructed throughout history in different ways and in different settings (Andersen, 2003).

Therefore, genealogy as a method focuses on the continuity and discontinuity of a topic over history. In this thesis, the words dyslexia and dyslexic and how they have been constructed over history in the UK media will be investigated using genealogy.

Although archaeology and genealogy have been discussed separately, it is important to note that the two discourse theories cannot be separated as they overlap in their methods and ideas (Andersen, 2003). Furthermore, the methods are complementary to one another and are ‘equally useful and valuable’ (Scheurich & McKenzie, 2005, p. 850). Archaeology provides a snapshot of discourse at a particular moment in time whereas genealogy provides information on the process of how the discourse was produced over time by looking at repetitive discourses used to construct particular topics, concepts and subjects.

This section has outlined the methodology put forward by Foucault both in his archaeological and genealogical works. The next section will discuss some of the limitations of FDA. Section 0 will outline how FDA will be applied in this thesis and will discuss the methods used for analysis.

5.1.2 Mediating the limitations of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

As previously stated, Foucault (1972a) argues that nothing has meaning outside of discourse. This means that any analysis of texts is also not outside discourse. Discourse analysists thus ‘participate in discourse as ‘parrhesiasts’ (Jager & Maier, 2016, p. 119). In other words, the analyst will be expressing their own opinions and interpretations of discourse and thus cannot make claims to absolute truth. Jager and Maier (2016) argue that the analysists must be clear about this during their research.

One of the main limitations of discourse analysis is researcher bias in the way in which texts are selected for analysis (Widdowson, 1995, 2004). Usually, texts are selected as they are deemed to be 'typical', however, Koller and Mautner (2004, p. 218) argue that there is a hidden danger that the text selected is not typical but has been selected because it has been of interest to the analyst. Hoey (2001, p. 9) argues that 'the suspicion of only finding what one sets out to find always lingers in the air'. In addition, by choosing a typical text, texts which present a more complex picture of events may be overlooked by the analyst (Baker et al., 2008, p. 283). By combining FDA and CL I aim to address and overcome some of these criticisms. This will be discussed in section 5.3 below.

Furthermore, Widdowson (2004, p. 169) argues that discourse analysis is based on interpretations which 'cannot be validated by analysis' thus the analyst cannot reveal particular discourses or truths. Additionally, Hoey (2001) argues that a text can only ever be interpreted in one way which means that any analysis cannot be taken as final. These criticisms will be taken into consideration during the analysis process.

5.3 Combining Corpus Linguistics and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

This following section will explain how corpus linguistics and Foucauldian discourse analysis have been combined in this study to provide a coherent analytic approach. An evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of combining these two methods for this study will be provided.

One of the major benefits of combining CL with FDA is that a much wider data set, giving a more representative picture, is being used compared with using FDA alone, whereby one or two texts are analysed in depth. A combination of the two methods is a move towards methodological pluralism.

Another advantage of combining these two methods is that using CL alone can result in a more descriptive analysis which can result in a lot of 'so what'

findings (Baker & Levon, 2015); with the combination of FDA interpretation, critique and an explanation of the data is offered providing a more in-depth analysis. Indeed, combining the methods of FDA and CL in this way allows alternative representations of a discursive event to be sought; rather than analysing one article in detail, this method allows the comparison between the one article and the whole corpus making it possible to ensure that conclusions drawn from FDA are in line with the data as a whole.

The ontological position of this study was conducted predominantly from a social constructionist perspective. Social constructivism argues that the world in which we live in is constructed through different forms of knowledge and that there is no single reality or truth. Schutz (1962, p. 5) argues that:

> All facts are from the outset facts selected from a universal context by the activities of our mind. They are, therefore, always interpreted facts, either facts looked at as detached from their context by an artificial abstraction or facts considered in their particular setting.

A social constructivism perspective, therefore, asserts that social phenomena (such as language and meaning) is being achieved by social actors and is in a constant state of revision. From a Foucauldian perspective these social actors will be those who hold powerful positions within society. Indeed, Foucault's theories encourage the researcher to challenge our own assumptions and what is presented to us as truth. He argues that he is not interested in what is constituted as truth but rather how people make rules for deciding what is true and what is false (Foucault, 1976/2000b). Therefore, FDA in this research, has the ontological position of constructionism as it aims to investigate the different forms of knowledge presented within the media about dyslexia. CL, on the other hand, is more ontologically based in the field of positivism (Sinclair, 1991). Positivism is 'an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond' (Bryman, 2008, p. 13). Thus, CL is based on scientific observation, empirical enquiry and deals with facts and not values (Gray, 2018; Sinclair, 1991). However, the CL method in this

study has been used to produce the data but is not used on its own to analyse the data. CL methods of analysis (see section 5.5) have been employed to ascertain patterns within the language in order to interpret the many truths about the ways in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject have been constructed in the UK media, taking a social constructionist viewpoint throughout.

The combination of CL and FDA is a move away from the use of the 'mono-method research' prevalent in educational research (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). By triangulating the methods, it is hoped that the research will 'get closer to the truth by bringing together multiple forms of data' (Ellingson, 2013, p. 422). However, within this project truth will always be considered to be socially constructed. FDA will be used as a way of confirming and strengthening any conclusions drawn from the whole data set. This allows for different perspectives on the data (McEnery & Hardie, 2011). Layder (1993, p. 128) argues that methodological triangulation allows for more robust interpretations and explanations of the data. The results of triangulation are convergence. Convergence is when the results from the combined methods confirm one another.

In this thesis the CL part of the study was carried out first, as the corpora created for this study was used as an entry point for analysis meaning that it had a data driven approach. This means that the corpus analysis informed the decision making around the examples chosen to apply FDA to. Furthermore, the results of the CL analysis were used to aid the FDA and the results of both the analyses were constantly compared during the research process, making the two methods complementary.

5.4 Data collection and the sample

This section will outline the data collection process used in this research. It will discuss the resulting data map produced and highlight any missing data

from the study. Finally, the structure of the corpora will be introduced, detailing the number of news items included in the final corpora constructed as part of this study.

5.4.1 Data Collection

The data collected for this study is comprised of UK newspaper articles on the topic of dyslexia between 1975 and 2017. The date parameters for this study were selected because 1975 is the earliest date available on the online interface used for the study (LexisNexis) and 2017 was selected to allow time for data collection and analysis as the research needed to align with the doctoral thesis writing and timeline.

The data was collected from LexisNexis which is an online interface of newspapers and periodicals which searches over 40,000 data sources for news and is updated on daily basis (LexisNexis, 2017). LexisNexis was chosen as it is a reliable source of newspaper data and has been used by other researchers in the field such as Gabrielatos and Baker (2008). Furthermore, other sources of online articles such as News On the Web (Davies, 2013), an online newspaper corpus displayed many duplicates when searched for articles about dyslexia. For example, when the word ‘dyslexia’ appeared in an article seven times, it would show up in the results as seven separate articles. TES was also unavailable in the News On the Web (NOW) corpus.

As previously stated, this thesis will consist of both specialist and non-specialist media from the UK. The newspapers were selected for this study on the basis that they were available on LexisNexis, however, this is the majority of the national newspapers available in the UK.

The UK newspapers are published either on a daily or weekly basis and can have national or regional coverage. All the newspapers in this study have national coverage with the exception of City which is a regional newspaper for London. There are five different styles of newspaper published in the UK; these are broadsheets, compacts, tabloids, freesheets and supplements. Broadsheet newspapers are newspapers which have large, folded sheets and are 'considered to contain serious, in-depth journalism' (OED, 2004). Broadsheet newspapers are often compared with tabloid newspapers which are traditionally half the size of a broadsheet and 'are usually characterized as popular in style and dominated by sensational stories' (OED, 2008). A compact newspaper is a broadsheet quality newspaper but is the size of a tabloid newspaper. The Times Newspaper became a compact in November 2004 (National Readership Survey, 2017). The last style of newspaper in the UK is the freesheet which is a newspaper which is distributed free of charge.

Most UK newspapers have a daily edition and a Sunday edition. The Sunday edition tends to be longer and often has a different editor from the daily edition. The only UK newspaper which does not have a daily equivalent is The People. All together 24 newspapers were used in this study, a full list can be found in **Table 1**.

Table 1: **Newspapers included in the final study**

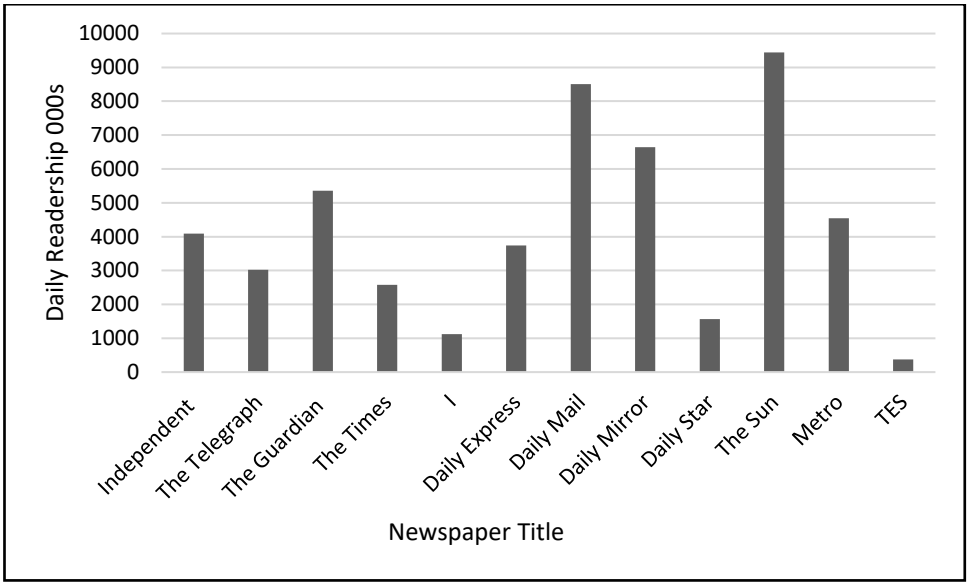
Newspaper Title	Newspaper Type
The Independent	Broadsheet
The Independent on Sunday	Broadsheet
The Sunday Telegraph	Broadsheet
The Guardian	Broadsheet
The Observer	Broadsheet
The Times	Compact
The Sunday Times	Compact
I	Compact

The Daily Express	Tabloid
The Sunday Express	Tabloid
The Daily Mail	Tabloid
The Mail on Sunday	Tabloid
The Daily Mirror	Tabloid
The Sunday Mirror	Tabloid
The Daily Star	Tabloid
The Daily Star on Sunday	Tabloid
The Sun	Tabloid
The Sun on Sunday	Tabloid
People	Tabloid
Metro	Freesheet
City	Freesheet
The Times Educational Supplement	Supplement
The Times Higher Education Supplement	Supplement
The Business*	Magazine

***** The Business has also been included which converted to a magazine format in 2006 and closed in 2008 (Baker et al., 2013).

As is shown in **Figure 3** (below), of these 24 newspapers, the biggest brands (by circulation) are The Sun, People, The Daily Mail and The Telegraph (PAMCo, 2018). Furthermore, **Figure 3** also shows that the Sunday editions are much more widely read than the daily editions of the same newspaper, for example The Sun on Sunday has 44% more readers than its daily edition, The Sun. Where the education sections were available for these newspapers, they were included within the specialist media corpus. Although this is new data from 2020, earlier readership figures show similar trends (see PAMCo for further information).

Figure 3: Daily Readership: March 2020 – 17 April 2021 (PAMCo, 2020).



Note. The figures for People, The Business and City UK were not available from PAMCo (2020). The data for TES was obtained from TES (2010)

The original data collected for this study was carried out by the way of the following search query:

dyslexia* OR dyslexic* OR dysl* OR learning difficulty OR reading disability OR reading disorder OR specific learning difficulties OR specific reading disabilities

This search query was derived after careful review of the literature in the field of dyslexia (see chapter two for further discussion). Elliott in *Dyslexia: Beyond the Debate* (Elliott & Nicolson, 2016) argues that the terms in my search query above are often used interchangeably by professionals in the field of dyslexia. Therefore, they have all been included in the search term to ensure that all articles about dyslexia are found in the searches conducted as part of this study (further discussion regarding dyslexia and associated terms can be found in the preceding chapter, section 2.1). The following section details how this search term was used to create a ‘map’ of all the

possible data found in LexisNexis. It then goes onto outline the inclusion and exclusion criteria used to systematically identify the articles relevant to this study (i.e., subject matter had to be about dyslexia) to be included in the final corpus. The next part of this section outlines how the corpus and sub-corpora were built using the data collected.

5.4.2 Data Map

The data available in LexisNexis

The first stage of the data collection process was to find the date of the first issue for each newspaper in the study and compare this with coverage available in LexisNexis. This will identify any gaps in the data in LexisNexis. All the major UK national newspapers with their Sunday editions were searched. These are a mixture of broadsheets, tabloids, compacts and freesheets and cover political views from the centre, left and right (as outlined in chapter one, section 1.4.3 and appendix 1). A web search for each newspaper title was conducted to ascertain the date of the first issue, this was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. The next step was to ascertain the coverage for each newspaper title in LexisNexis, this was done by looking at the source information provided by LexisNexis (an example of the source information from LexisNexis is found in appendix 3) and this date was recorded alongside the first issue date in Excel.

This step of data collection highlighted any potential missing data in LexisNexis. For example, *The Daily Mirror* has been in publication since 1903 but the coverage in LexisNexis starts on the 29 May 1995, this means that there is the potential for missing data between 1903 and 28 May 1995. The first year to have all newspaper articles available in LexisNexis for all newspapers included in this study is 2010 since the City UK newspaper is unavailable until this year. A summary of this data is represented in **Table 2** (below). Following Baker et al. (2013), in order to mediate the missing data in

LexisNexis, changes in frequency over time will be looked at by taking an average number of articles across the newspapers that were available for collection during each year. This will be presented below in chapter six where the final sample is discussed in detail.

Table 2: **Record of missing data in LexisNexis**

Title of newspaper	First year/date of publication	Starting date available in LexisNexis	No of years missing in LexisNexis/Corpus (1975 -2017)
The Guardian	1821	12/02/1975	0
The Independent	07/10/1986	19/09/1988	2
The Daily Telegraph	1855	24/08/1989	6
The Independent on Sunday	28/01/1990	28/01/1990	0
The Sunday Times	1821	07/07/1985	1
The Observer*	04/12/1791	07/10/1990	7
The Sunday Telegraph	1855	05/11/2000	16
The Business**	1992	01/01/1992	6
I	26/10/2010	28/10/2010	0
The Times	01/01/1785	01/07/1985	1
Daily Mail	1896	01/01/1992	8
The Daily Mirror	1903	29/05/1995	11

The Sun	15/09/1964	31/12/1999	8
The Daily Express	1900	11/10/1999	15
The Daily Star	02/11/1978	01/12/2000	16
The Mail on Sunday	1896	05/01/1992	8
The Sunday Mirror	1963	04/06/1995	11
The Sunday Express	1918	10/10/1999	15
The Sun on Sunday	15/09/1964	02/01/2000	16
The People	1881	02/01/1994	11
Metro	16/03/1999	05/12/2007	9
City AM	2005	13/10/2010	5
TES	06/09/1910	28/10/1994	10

* Data is not available for 1992 online.

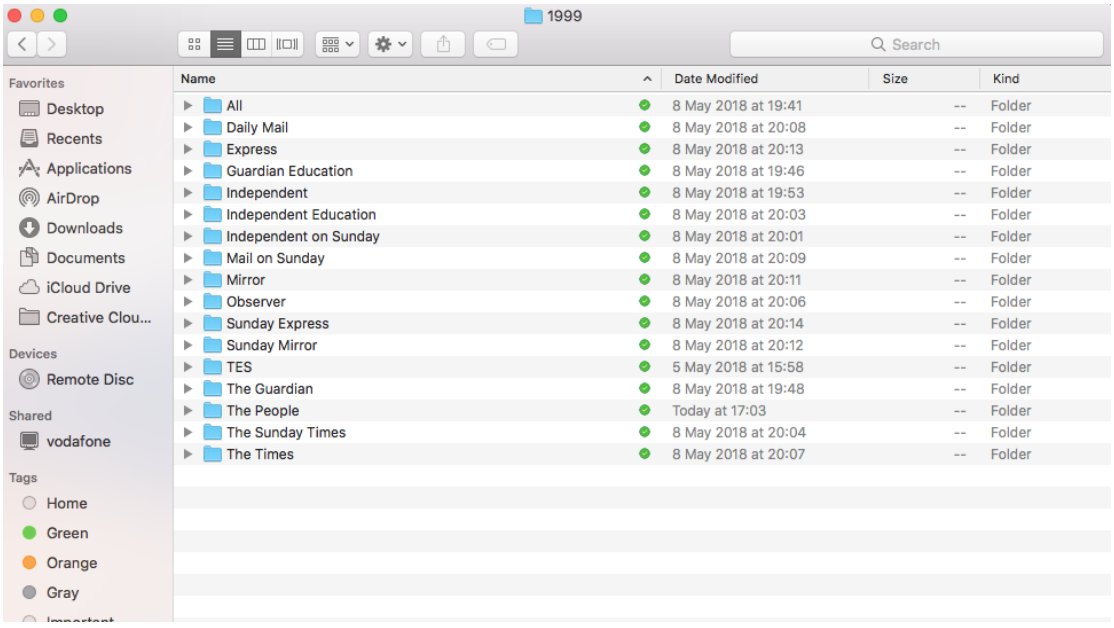
** The Business newspaper stopped publishing in 2008

The search strategy

The second stage of the data collection process was to search LexisNexis and produce a map of the available data. In order to do this, the search term outlined in the previous section was used alongside the following filters: anywhere in text and UK national newspapers. The search was carried out for each year in the study (1975-2017) individually. The number of articles found for each newspaper was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet and the

articles were downloaded in their entirety, in the format produced by LexisNexis (Word) and saved into a folder for each year. Further searches included the same search term but without the filter of national newspapers, instead City UK, Metro and TES filters were used to gain the results for each of these three non-national newspapers. The statistics were recorded, and the files downloaded in the same way as for the national newspapers. It was decided at this point that not just newspaper articles would be included in the final corpus, but letters from the general public, editorials, comment sections etc would also be included as they can offer different insights into the ways in which dyslexia has been socially constructed in the media. The files generated from this second stage of the data collection process were saved into folders for each year and then sub-folders for each newspaper (as shown in **Figure 4** below).

Figure 4: The file structure of the data map (example shown is for the year 1999)



At this stage of the data collection process, I have used convenience sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling. ‘A convenience sample is one that is simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility’

(Bryman, 2008, p. 183). I would maintain that I have used convenience sampling as the only data which I have access to is via LexisNexis. However, the sample is representative of the population as a whole due to the high number of articles included within the final corpora.

This second stage of the data collection process produced 103, 866 potential newspaper articles all of which were published in the UK. This figure seemed to be a large amount of data to screen in the next stage of data collection. Therefore, I looked at all of the articles from 2017 (1950 in total) and found that all of the articles which contained the search term 'learning difficulty' were not about people with dyslexia but rather about people with cognitive and intellectual difficulties. Thus, the decision was made to remove 'learning difficulty' from the search term and recollect the data from LexisNexis using the revised search term, which was as follows:

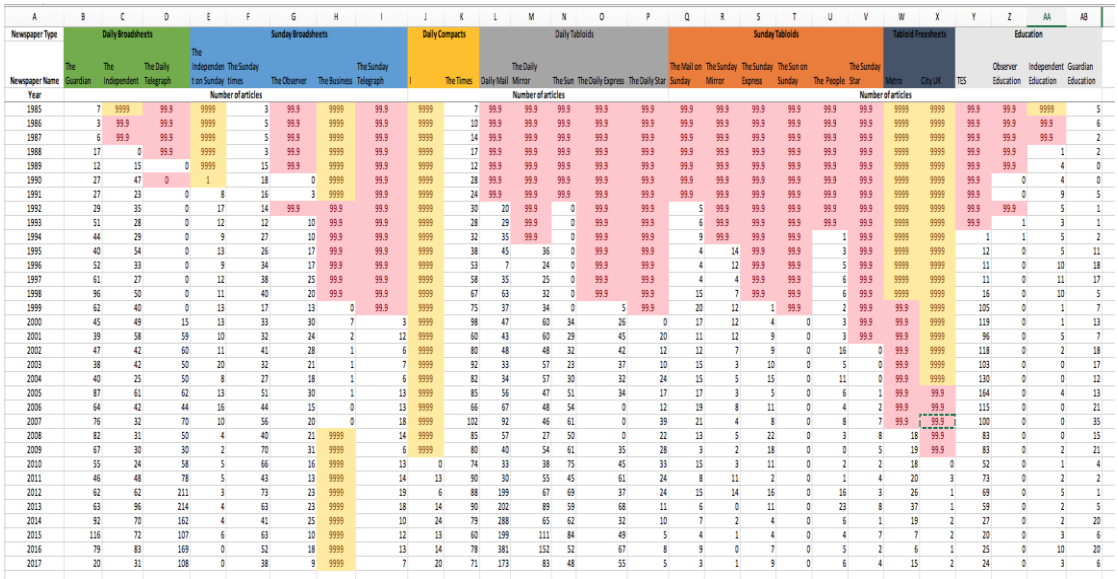
dyslexia* OR dyslexic* OR dysl* OR reading disability OR reading disorder OR specific learning difficulties OR specific reading disabilities

In summary, the first stage of the data collection process was to identify all of the available data in LexisNexis for the newspapers selected for this study using coverage information in LexisNexis and the date of the first issue for each newspaper in the study. The second stage of data collection was to search LexisNexis using the revised search term above to map the number of potential articles to be included in the study.

The final data map produced using data from the first and second stages of the data collection process contained information on any missing data (represented as code 99.9 in **Figure 5** below), as well as the number of articles for each newspaper, for each year. **Figure 5** below shows what the

final data map looked like in Excel (NB: code 9999 represents ‘not in publication for this year’).

Figure 5: The final data map



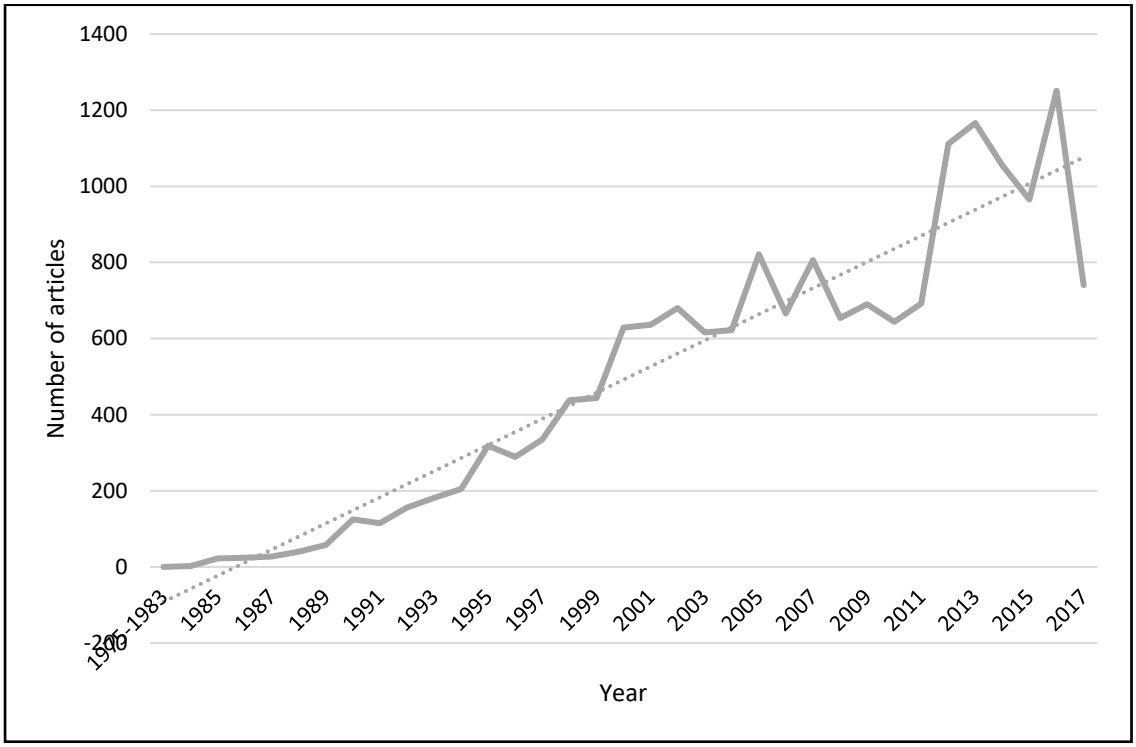
Newspaper Type	Daily Broadsheets			Sunday Broadsheets					Daily Compacts		Daily Tabloids					Sunday Tabloids						Tabloid Freesheets		Education			
Newspaper Name	The Guardian	The Independent	The Daily Telegraph	The Independent on Sunday	The Sunday times	The Observer	The Business	The Sunday Telegraph	!	The Times	Daily Mail	The Daily Mirror	The Sun	The Daily Express	The Daily Star	The Mail on Sunday	The Sunday Mirror	The Sunday Express	The Sun on Sunday	The People	The Sunday Star	Metro	City UK	TES	Observer Education	Independent Education	Guardian Education
Year	Number of articles										Number of articles					Number of articles											
1985	7	9999	99.9	9999	3	99.9	9999	99.9	9999	7	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	9999	5
1986	3	99.9	99.9	9999	5	99.9	9999	99.9	9999	10	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	99.9	6
1987	6	99.9	99.9	9999	5	99.9	9999	99.9	9999	14	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	99.9	2
1988	17	0	99.9	9999	3	99.9	9999	99.9	9999	17	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	1	2
1989	12	15	0	9999	15	99.9	9999	99.9	9999	12	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	4	0
1990	27	47	0	1	18	0	9999	99.9	9999	28	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	0	4	0
1991	27	23	0	8	16	3	9999	99.9	9999	24	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	0	9	5
1992	29	35	0	17	14	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	30	20	99.9	0	99.9	99.9	5	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	99.9	5	1
1993	51	28	0	12	12	10	99.9	99.9	9999	28	29	99.9	0	99.9	99.9	6	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	9999	9999	99.9	1	3	1
1994	44	29	0	9	27	10	99.9	99.9	9999	32	35	99.9	0	99.9	99.9	9	99.9	99.9	99.9	1	99.9	9999	9999	1	1	5	2
1995	40	54	0	13	26	17	99.9	99.9	9999	38	45	36	0	99.9	99.9	4	14	99.9	99.9	3	99.9	9999	9999	12	0	5	11
1996	52	33	0	9	34	17	99.9	99.9	9999	53	7	24	0	99.9	99.9	4	12	99.9	99.9	5	99.9	9999	9999	11	0	10	18
1997	61	27	0	12	38	25	99.9	99.9	9999	58	35	25	0	99.9	99.9	4	4	99.9	99.9	6	99.9	9999	9999	11	0	11	17
1998	96	50	0	11	40	20	99.9	99.9	9999	67	63	32	0	99.9	99.9	15	7	99.9	99.9	6	99.9	9999	9999	16	0	10	5
1999	62	40	0	13	17	13	0	99.9	9999	75	37	34	0	5	99.9	20	12	1	99.9	2	99.9	99.9	9999	105	0	1	7
2000	45	49	15	13	33	30	7	3	9999	98	47	60	34	26	0	17	12	4	0	3	99.9	99.9	9999	119	0	1	13
2001	39	58	59	10	32	24	2	12	9999	60	43	60	29	45	20	11	12	9	0	3	99.9	99.9	9999	96	0	5	7
2002	47	42	60	11	41	28	1	6	9999	80	48	48	32	42	12	12	7	9	0	16	0	99.9	9999	118	0	2	18
2003	38	42	50	20	32	21	1	7	9999	92	33	57	23	37	10	15	3	10	0	5	0	99.9	9999	103	0	0	17
2004	40	25	50	8	27	18	1	6	9999	82	34	57	30	32	24	15	5	15	0	11	0	99.9	9999	130	0	0	12
2005	87	61	62	13	51	30	1	13	9999	85	56	47	51	34	17	17	3	5	0	6	1	99.9	99.9	164	0	4	13
2006	64	42	44	16	44	15	0	13	9999	66	67	48	54	0	12	19	8	11	0	4	2	99.9	99.9	115	0	0	21
2007	76	32	70	10	56	20	0	18	9999	102	92	46	61	0	39	21	4	8	0	8	7	99.9	99.9	100	0	0	35
2008	82	31	50	4	40	21	9999	14	9999	85	57	27	50	0	22	13	5	22	0	3	8	18	99.9	83	0	0	15
2009	67	30	30	2	70	31	9999	6	9999	80	40	54	61	35	28	3	2	18	0	0	5	19	99.9	83	0	2	21
2010	55	24	58	5	66	16	9999	13	0	74	33	38	75	45	33	15	3	11	0	2	2	18	0	52	0	1	4
2011	46	48	78	5	43	13	9999	14	13	90	30	55	45	61	24	8	11	2	0	1	4	20	3	73	0	2	2
2012	62	62	211	3	73	23	9999	19	6	88	199	67	69	37	24	15	14	16	0	16	3	26	1	69	0	5	1
2013	63	96	214	4	63	23	9999	18	14	90	202	89	59	68	11	6	0	11	0	23	8	37	1	59	0	2	5
2014	92	70	162	4	41	25	9999	10	24	79	288	65	62	32	10	7	2	4	0	6	1	19	2	27	0	2	20
2015	116	72	107	6	63	10	9999	12	13	60	199	111	84	49	5	4	1	4	0	4	7	7	2	20	0	3	6
2016	79	83	169	0	52	18	9999	13	14	78	381	152	52	67	8	9	0	7	0	5	2	6	1	25	0	10	20
2017	20	31	108	0	38	9	9999	7	20	71	173	83	48	55	5	3	1	9	0	6	4	15	2	24	0	3	6

Yield

The second stage of data collection with the revised search term produced a total of 17,223 potential newspaper articles which is a more manageable amount of data for the scope of this thesis and contained considerably less exclusions than the data produced by the search term which included ‘learning difficulties.’

Figure 6 below shows how many potential articles were found in each year using the revised search term (above). The trend line in **Figure 6** shows that there has been an overall increase in the number of articles about dyslexia between 1975 and 2017.

Figure 6: Number of potential articles about dyslexia



5.4.3 Article selection

The third and final stage in the data collection process was to systematically exclude any articles which were not relevant to this study. The first step was to write a set of exclusion/inclusion criteria. Thus, to be included in this study, the articles had to:

- Not be duplicated
- Had to be about dyslexia/dyslexic person/someone with SpLD

The inclusion criteria were written before the articles were sorted and looked at in detail to ensure that the articles are not selected to fit a certain

hypothesis or view of the researcher (reviewer selection bias). This method also ensures greater efficiency (Torgerson, 2003)

At the article selection stage of the data collection process, I have used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves the researcher selecting individual sites of study, in this case newspaper items, ‘because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study’ (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). This ensured that there were no duplicates within the data which could lead to an overstatement of the phenomena under investigation and that only articles concerning dyslexia were included in the final corpora. This systematic process was chosen to reduce researcher bias and ensure replicability. The details of how this was completed are outlined in the three stages of screening below.

First stage screening (headline screening)

The next step in the article selection process was to identify potentially relevant articles to be included in the final corpora (first stage screening). This was done systematically by initially screening the headlines of all the articles found in the first stage of data collection. This process involved giving each headline an ID number so that it could be identified in later stages of the research process. Irrelevant articles were filtered out using the exclusion criteria above. The reason for exclusion was recorded against any headlines filtered out in the first stage of screening. Mainly duplicate articles were filtered out during this stage. Additionally, headlines containing the words “dyslexia” or “dyslexic” were automatically added straight into the final corpus and thus did not need to go through the second or third stages of screening. For example, the following articles were added into the final corpus based on their headline:

‘Back to front ideas about dyslexia’ (Redwood, 1998)

> ‘Dyslexic George, 14, is a top falconer after years of being bullied at school’ (Pilditch, 2004)

Any headlines that were ambiguous and not obviously about dyslexia/SpLD were marked on the Excel spreadsheet accordingly and went through to the second stage of screening. For example, the following articles were identified as being ambiguous and needed further investigation:

> ‘Killer used tranquillisers’ (White, 1988)

> ‘Cruel schooling system that lets children down’ (Rees-Mogg, 1990)

The full results from the first stage of screening are as follows: 1931 duplicates were found, 19 news items were excluded as they were not about dyslexia and 2036 articles were identified as definitely being about dyslexia/SpLD and were added to the final corpus; the remaining 13237 articles went through to the second stage of screening as outlined below.

Second stage screening (keyword screening)

The second stage of screening was to read in full the paragraphs containing one of the search terms (listed in the search strategy above). These are highlighted in red in the document produced by LexisNexis (see appendix 4 for an example). Again, irrelevant articles were filtered out using the exclusion criteria above and reasons for exclusion were recorded in the Excel spreadsheet.

During this stage of screening 13,237 articles were examined. As a result of the keyword screening, 6218 articles were added to the final corpus, 1184 duplicates were found, and 5730 newspaper items were excluded from the study on account of not being about dyslexia/SpLD/someone with dyslexia. Only 105 newspaper items were identified for the final stage of screening.

Third stage screening (full article screening)

The final stage of screening involved reading the remaining 105 articles in full and checking that they all met the inclusion criteria. Any articles which did not meet the inclusion criteria were filtered out and recorded in Excel. In this stage of screening only 1 duplicate was identified, 75 newspaper items were excluded on account of not being about dyslexia/SpLD/someone with dyslexia and 29 newspaper items were added into the final corpus.

For every article included in the study and thus final corpora, a record was created in Excel with the following information:

- ID number (given at the start of the data collection process)
- Date of publication
- Title of publication
- Headline
- Section in newspaper
- What corpus (specialist or non-specialist) the article appears in
- File name
- Theme
- Researcher comments

In summary, during the whole screening process, 17223 newspaper items were identified as potentially being relevant to this study. After the three stages of screening, 8283 items were included in the final corpus, 3116 items were duplicates (code 1), either being re-printed in a Sunday edition of the

newspaper or appearing online as well as in print, and 5824 items were excluded from the study as they were not about dyslexia (code 2). The screening process is summarised below in **Figure 7** and **Figure 8**.

Figure 7: Summary of screening process

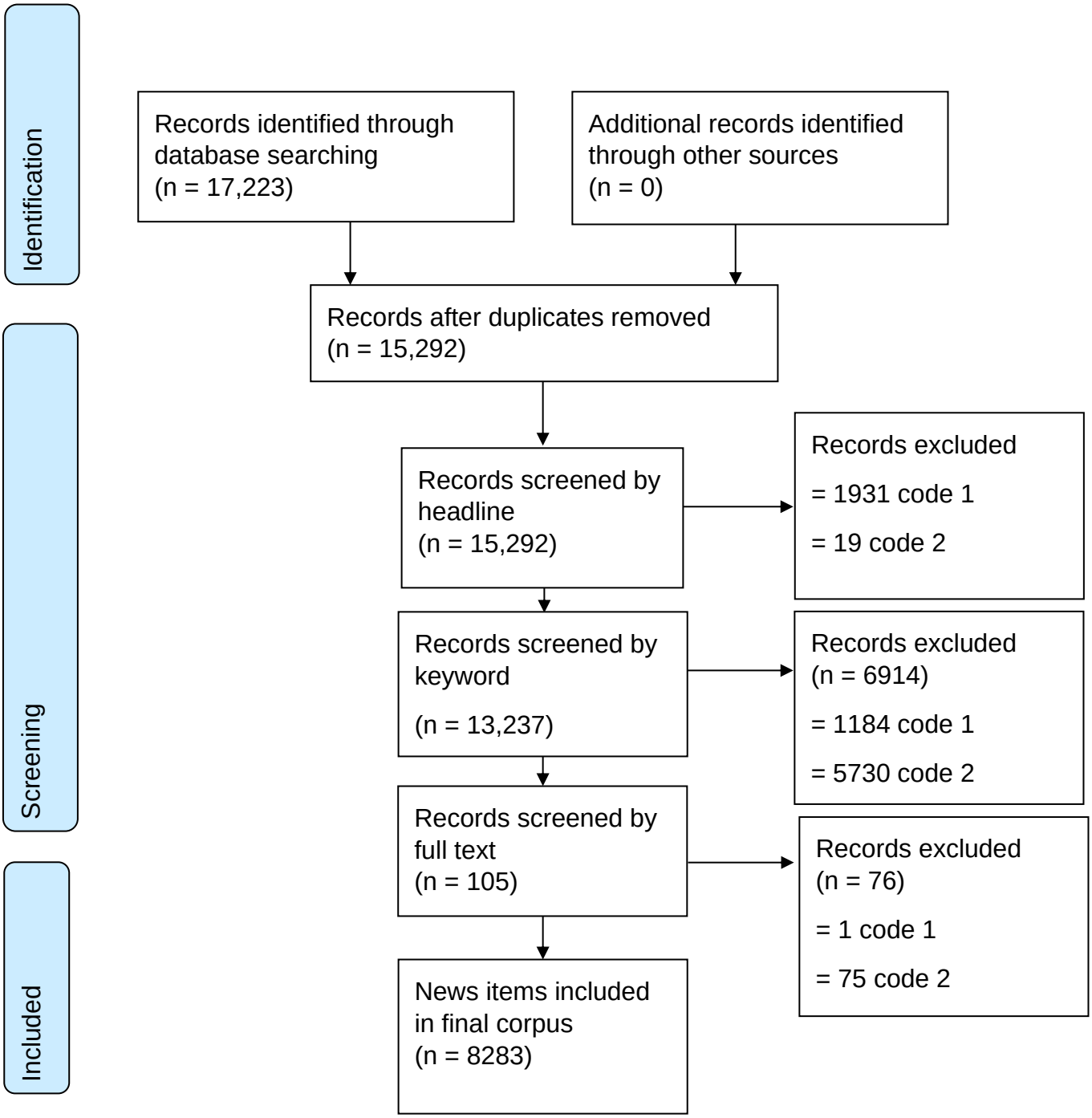
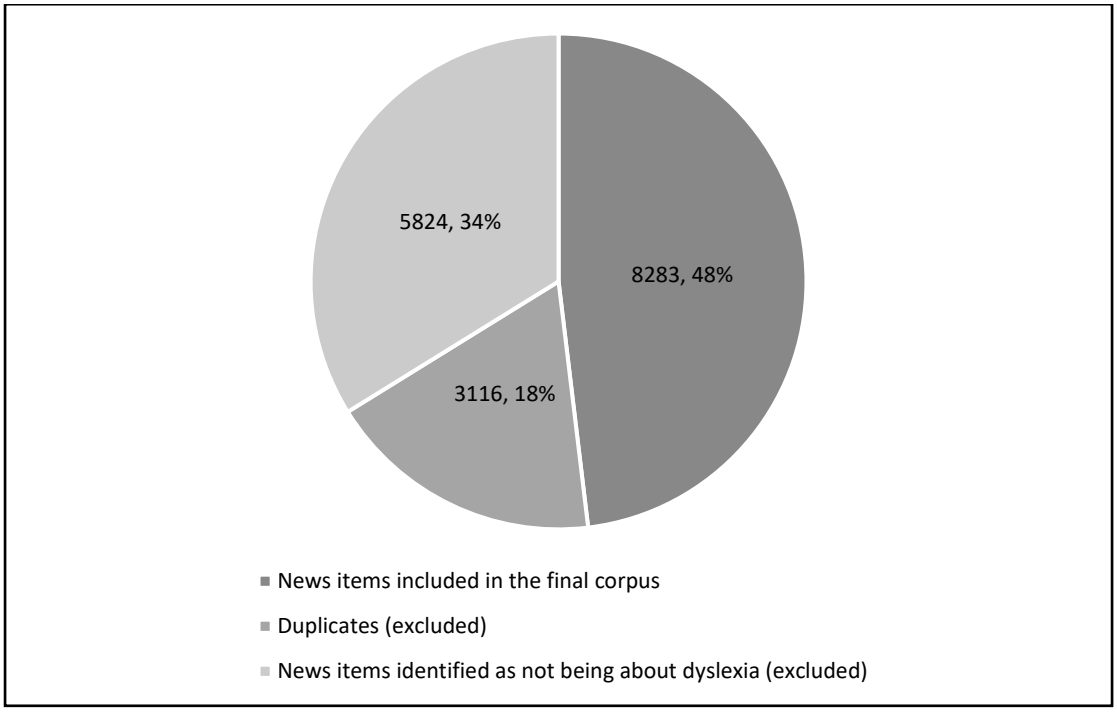


Figure 8: Summary of final figures from the screening process



The final sample of newspaper articles, letters and editorials totalled 8283. The average number of news items per year in the corpus is equal to 244. This sample accurately represents the population of newspaper articles available about dyslexia within the selected time period (1975-2017), and also it is a large sample which leads to greater reliability and the ability to use 'sophisticated statistics' (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 101). The final sample of newspaper articles is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

The following section gives details of the how the final corpus and the two sub-corpora were constructed for this study. It provides a detailed description of how the corpus was stored and what annotation was added to the corpus. The subsequent section details the methods of analysis used for both the CL and the FDA elements of the study.

5.4.4 Building the corpora

As discussed in section 5.1.1 the corpora which have been constructed for this thesis are specialised corpora which means that they have been restricted in terms of the texts that have been included within them. The following restrictions were applied: time (1975-2017), place (UK), genre (newspaper articles) and topic (dyslexia). The final corpora all contained complete texts and not samples. Additionally, news items from all newspaper sections were included e.g., editorials, comment pages, letters, features etc. This section will provide an outline of how the two corpora (one specialist media and one non-specialist media) were constructed for this study. The decision to construct a specialised corpus was made because no current corpora existed which met the needs of this study.

As Conrad (2002, p. 77) argues ‘corpus design is crucial to reliable and generalizable results…it is important to note that the size of the corpus, the types of texts included, the number of texts, the sampling procedure and the size of each sample are all important considerations.’

The previous sections 5.4.1 to 5.4.3 outline data collection and screening to ensure that only articles about dyslexia or someone with dyslexia were included in the final corpora. It was also during this process where duplicates were removed. The final corpora included 8283 news items which were divided into two sub-corpora by media type (specialist and non-specialist media), to aid the comparative aspects of the thesis. Although the CL analysis made use of the whole corpus, time constraints mean that a similar approach was not feasible for the FDA analysis. Although building a corpus is time consuming, one of the advantages of building my own corpus is that I have full control of what is included and excluded from the corpus improving the integrity of the data. Furthermore, in the process of building the corpus, I have gained a detailed visual knowledge of the data contained within it which

results in better quality assurance. The final corpus will also provide a resource for further research.

Planning a storage system

The corpus was constructed specifically with features of the Wordsmith 7.0 software in mind. In this software, files have to be saved as plain text files (as is the case with many corpus linguistics software). Additionally, standard concordancers require plain text files which are stripped of formatting, layout and visual information (Scott, 2018). Another software requirement in constructing a corpus is that each news item has to be saved as a separate file, otherwise the whole corpus would be treated as a single text in Wordsmith 7.0 (Baker, 2006b; Reppen, 2010). Furthermore, saving each news item in a separate file enables comparison and analysis by newspaper type, date etc. (Baker et al., 2008).

During the construction of the corpora each newspaper article was stripped of any metadata contained in the file from LexisNexis and saved as a TXT file either into the folder for specialist media news items or the folder for non-specialist media news items. The original file was kept separately for later analysis in the FDA section of the study where metadata is very important. Each file was given a unique file name and followed the following format: unique ID number (given to each article during the screening process), T (tabloid), B (broadsheet/Compact), or F (freesheet) followed by the date. For example, ID3 B1985 would refer to the article which was given the ID number 3 during the screening process and is from a broadsheet newspaper and was published in 1985.

Keeping records

All newspaper articles which were added into the corpora were recorded systematically. This was done to ensure replicability and to aid analysis for this study. The records included the unique ID number, date of publication, title of newspaper publication, headline, newspaper section news item is from, which corpus the news item was added into and the filename given to the news item. Additionally, there was a section to write notes if necessary. An example of a full record for a newspaper article can be found in appendix 4.

Corpus mark-up annotation

Corpus annotation is 'the practice of adding interpretive, linguistic information to an electronic corpus of spoken/written language data' (Leech, 1997). Corpus mark-up is additional information which may aid the analyst, for example, author name, title, article length etc. In the case of the corpora constructed for this thesis, the decision was made not to annotate the corpora for linguistic analysis. This means that there are no grammatical annotations (such as annotations for nouns, verbs etc) in the final corpora. Grammatical annotations were not necessary for the purpose of this study as it is not being carried out from a linguistics perspective but rather from an education/social science perspective.

Each file was marked up with header files placed at the beginning of the file. Angle-bracket tags of XML text was used (McEnery & Hardie, 2011). The header included the following information: file name, newspaper type, newspaper title and date of publication. For example, the header for the news item ID3 was as follows:

<File name = ID3 B1985>

<Newspaper Type = Broadsheet>

<Newspaper Title = The Times>

<Publication date = December 5 1985, Thursday>

By using bracket XML text for the header, the corpus can be searched using the information in the headers, for example or only news items from a particular date. This enables the texts within the corpus to be analysed by group. In this study, a frequency keyword list was generated by searching news items by date using the headers so that any diachronic changes in the way in which dyslexia has been reported could be investigated. Additionally by using bracket XML text in the header, any information included within this header is excluded from token/word counts as well as wordlists and concordance data, so for instance if there are 500 news items from the Guardian newspaper, the title of the newspaper could appear as a keyword (as there are 500 instances in the corpus of the word ‘guardian’), but by tagging the header information in this way it is not included in the data. Chapter 6 gives detailed description of the final corpora.

5.5 Methods of analysis

Within this section I will discuss the methods of analysis I employed with the data collected as part of this study. I will outline the methodological techniques of corpus-based research used before discussing the methods of analysis used in the FDA element of the study.

5.5.1 Corpus Linguistics Analysis

Software used for analysis

Corpus linguistics relies on computer software to count linguistic patterns and perform statistical analysis (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998). For this

study, two software programs have been used in order to analyse the data from the CL part of the study: Wordsmith 7.0 (Scott, 2018) and LancsBox (Brezina, McEnery, & Wattam, 2015).

Wordsmith 7.0 is a third-generation corpus tool which is available to download and run on a PC and is not web-based. It can work with large amounts of data and has the ability to perform common statistical methods used in corpus linguistics such as log-likelihood scores, t-scores and Mutual Information scores. Wordsmith 7.0 is one of the most popular tools used for analysing corpora among linguists (Anthony, 2013).

LancsBox (previously known as Graphcoll) is a free software program that has been developed by Lancaster University to work with corpora and has the ability to visualise language data by producing collocation data graphically.

For this thesis a computer-assisted data analysis software (CAQDAS) called NVivo has also been used to analyse the data mainly to categorise the diachronic keywords. NVivo is known as a type of code-and-retrieve program that allows for efficient qualitative analysis (Bryman, 2008). In NVivo 20, coding is done with the use of nodes. Nodes are ‘a collection of references about a specific theme, topic, concept, idea or experience’, they can be descriptive or analytical and are usually created using themes in the data (NVivo, 2018). Nodes in this software are known as tree nodes, as they have a treelike structure, showing how the themes in the data are linked. Another type of node in NVivo are free nodes which standalone and are independent of any tree. The tree nodes created for this research were initially based on early findings from the frequency analysis (see appendix 5), but they were then adapted as new ideas, themes and categories for the data emerged during the coding process. This resulted in the final structure represented in appendix 6. Therefore, the coding for this study was mainly thematic;

Thematic coding is a multi-stage procedure which involves developing a system of categories or themes and applying them to the data collected (Flick, 2009). Both a deductive and an inductive approach was taken to code the data. A deductive approach to code the data starts with concepts and categories which are then related back to the text (Flick, 2009; Gray, 2018). So, in this research, categories were established during the frequency analysis and tree nodes created before detailed analysis of the rest of the data, making this stage deductive in nature. Inductive coding focuses on patterns which emerge during the data collection process. Consequently, in this research indictive coding was used during the analysis of the data and new themes and categories were then added into the coding structure.

Corpus linguistics is a quantitative methodology which primarily uses descriptive statistics such as frequency and concordance (Brezina, 2018; McEnery & Hardie, 2011). The following sections will discuss how these descriptive statistics will be used within this thesis.

Frequency

The most basic statistical measure and a central concept in CL is frequency (Gries, 2010, p. 270). Frequency is a descriptive statistic which does not test for significance but rather tallies the number of instances a word or phrase occurs in a corpus. A frequency list can be displayed in three orders: frequency, alphabetical or in order of first occurrence in the corpus (Barnbrook, 1996). A typical corpus will have a small number of high frequency words and a long list of words which only occur once which are known as hapax legomena (Scott & Tribble, 2006, p. 11). For example, in the BNC (a corpus of approximately 100 million words) 40% of the words in a frequency list are hapax legomena (Scott & Tribble, 2006, p. 26). In this study frequency has been used to compare the number of instances ‘dyslexia’ occurs in the SMC compared with the NSMC. Following Baker (2010a) the top ten frequency words will be investigated for the NSMC and

SMC. Since these two corpora are of differing sizes a normalized frequency will be calculated using the following formula from McEnery and Hardie (2011, p. 49):

Equation 1

Equation for normalised frequencies

$$nf = \frac{no.of\ examples\ of\ the\ word\ in\ the\ whole\ corpus}{size\ of\ the\ corpus}\ x\ base\ of\ normalisation$$

In this instance, the base of normalisation will be 100,000 as the specialist corpus contains less than 1 million words. Normalised frequencies are automatically generated in Wordsmith 7.0 and are essential when comparing two corpora of different sizes. However, following good practice, both raw scores and normalised frequencies have been reported (McEnery & Hardie, 2011).

Stubbs (1996, p. 107) argues ‘no terms are neutral. Choice of words expresses an ideological position’. In other words, frequency counts (along with other forms of statistical measures) in a corpus can reveal discourses regarding a particular topic and can ‘give the user a sociological profile of a given word or phrase enabling greater understanding of its use in particular contexts’ Baker (2006b, p. 47).

Keyness/Keywords: point of entry

A corpus-based concept which is related to frequency is keyness. Keyness in CL methodology compares frequencies of key words in one list to another and gives a measure of saliency and not just frequency (Baker, 2006b). Keyness is defined as ‘the statistically significantly higher frequency of

particular words in a corpus under analysis in comparison with another corpus' (Baker et al., 2008, p. 278). Keyness in this project has been used to investigate how homogenous the NSMC and SMC are to one another. This will give an indication of the stance the specialist media and non-specialist media have towards dyslexia. In other words, keyness can help to reveal the presence of hegemonic discourses. However, keywords themselves do not reveal discourses but 'will direct the researcher to important concepts in a text…that may help to highlight the existence of types of (embedded) discourse or ideology' (Baker, 2004, p. 347).

In Wordsmith 7.0 a keyword list can be complied on order to compare statistically significant words which may appear in one corpus compared to another and is presented in order of keyness. This highlights any significant lexical differences between the two corpora. A log-likelihood (LL) test is then performed in Wordsmith 7.0 and this allows for quick and accurate identification of lexical patterns (Scott, 2018). The LL measure gives each word a probability value (p-value) which indicates the amount of confidence that we have that a key word is key due to chance alone; the lower the p-value, the more likely a word appears in the corpus not by chance but rather as a result of the author's choice. Following Baker (2006b), this study has used the p-value $p<0.000001$ (which is the default p-value in Wordsmith 7.0) as the cut-off point in determining whether a word was key or not. Usually, in social science research a p-value of 0.5 is used as a cut-off point. However, in corpus linguistics 'much of the data is skewed' (Oakes, 1998, p. 4), as words often follow particular patterns (e.g. a noun or adjective usually follow an article). This means that a p-value cut-off point of $p<0.5$, in corpus linguistics, is not sensible. This is illustrated by Baker (2006b), who carried out a keyness test as part of his study on fox hunting. By using a cut-off point of $p<0.5$, 797 words out of 6,955 (11%) were classed as key which is far too many to examine. By using Wordsmith's default $p<0.000001$ value, this figure decreased to 22 keywords which was much more manageable.

To identify keywords in a corpus, a comparison of word frequencies within a corpus needs to be compared to another corpus, usually a reference corpus. A reference corpus is usually much larger and its aim is to represent the general nature of the language being studied and for English this is often the BNC or Brown Corpus (Baker et al., 2006, p. 138). However, S. Johnson and Ensslin (2006) presented some methodological concerns regarding using the BNC as a reference corpora. One such concern was the age disparity between their corpus and the BNC since the BNC was compiled over a decade before their corpus. Additionally, the BNC excludes proper names which are important when investigating the prominent social actors shaping the discourse in the media. S. Johnson and Ensslin (2006) argue that by building their own synchronous comparator corpus these methodological problems would have been solved. Therefore, for this study the NSMC will be used as the reference corpus; it has been compiled the same way and covers the same period making it more comparable than using the BNC. The NSMC is larger than the SMC and since the focus of this research is education it makes methodological sense to use the SMC as the main corpus for this part of the analysis.

The keywords were grouped into categories with the use NVivo 20 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2020) and Wordsmith 7.0 (Scott, 2018). NVivo was used to categorise the keywords into categories whereas Wordsmith was used to investigate the typical use of each keyword by conducting a concord analysis. NVivo was chosen as the software has the ability to add notes to the analysis (in the form of annotations) which was useful to add some context to some of the keywords.

The categories were not preselected before the data was analysed and were therefore data driven. This means that there are differences between the categories found within the NSMC and the SMC, for example, the category politics does not appear in the SMC. Nevertheless, there were general grammatical categories which existed across both corpora. Proper nouns

(except for the names of celebrity dyslexics and politicians) were added to their own category, but where the person in the newspaper article was part of an event their name was also added into the event. For example, in 1987 the name *Challis* was added to the proper noun category and the event *Challis allowed the use of PC in exams.* This allowed for the analysis of keywords and people associated with particular events.

During the categorisation of the keywords, a note was made of any discursive events so that these could be tracked and analysed separately to investigate whether there were any themes in the types of events being reported and also whether there were differences in the types of events reported in the SMC compared with the NSMC. To be classed as a discursive event there had to be at least two separate articles about the event. This was also set low (to begin with) because the SMC is a small corpus and between 1984 and 1998 the number of articles in each year were small so two articles equated to at least 10% of the whole corpus for this year. Likewise, the NSMC has a low number of articles between 1984 and 1989. However, the criteria for the number of articles changed according to how many articles there were in each year and in each corpus so that the number of articles still had to equate to around 10% of the corpus to be classed as an event. Recurring events (such as research into dyslexia) were also added to a separate classification so that these could be tracked easier.

One of the challenges with putting the keywords into events was that even though in some cases there were several keywords in the list that were associated with one event, all these keywords came from one article. For example, in 1992 within the SMC there are seven keywords (31% of the keywords for that year) associated with a report on Quaker schools (Croall, 1992). Looking at just the keywords this could be classed as a discursive event, however, the article is 1941 words long and there are only 22 articles in the SMC in 1992 which is why there are so many keywords associated with this one article. This means that if the sample is small the data in the

keyword list can become skewed by one long article. This was an important finding and care was made to ensure data of this kind were noted but not classed as a key event. I would therefore argue that one article on an event does not constitute as a discursive event as to be discursive it has to be continuous or repetitive.

Keywords in this thesis have also been used to answer the following research question: does the way in which dyslexia is socially constructed in UK specialist and non-specialist media discourse change over time? This was done with an analysis of diachronic keywords. The keywords were grouped into categories with the use NVivo 20 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2020) and Wordsmith 7.0 (Scott, 2018). NVivo was used to categorise the keywords into categories whereas Wordsmith was used to investigate the typical use of each keyword by conducting a concord analysis. NVivo was chosen as the software has the ability to add notes to the analysis (in the form of annotations) which was useful to add some context to some of the keywords, for example in the SMC the abbreviation SHMIS (Society of Headmasters of Independent Schools) occurs which I had not came across before. The keywords were grouped into categories that best reflected their most typical use by analysing all of the cases of each keyword where there were fewer than 100 cases and at least 100 random cases of each keyword (Baker, Brookes, & Evans, 2019) where there were more than 100 cases. This meant that I was able to plot the development of categories over time and compare the two corpora for frequent categories. The grammatical words category was not analysed due to it not revealing anything about the corpora.

The categories were not preselected before the data was analysed and were therefore data driven. This means that there are differences between the categories found within the NSMC and the SMC, for example, the category politics does not appear in the SMC. Nevertheless, there were general grammatical categories which existed across both corpora. Proper nouns

were added to into the cases for people so that they could be assigned the following information: gender, category and whether or not they were dyslexic. The category for people included items such as teacher, celebrity, politician, student and parent. This data was used to discuss who the key players in the corpora were and what role they played in constructing dyslexia and the dyslexic subject.

The data from the diachronic word analysis was also categorised into themes. Some of these themes such as male dominance and the school as a site of failure were identified earlier in the research process during the frequency word analysis. Other themes such as cures for dyslexia were identified during the diachronic word analysis. All themes were coded within NVivo and used to inform the analysis.

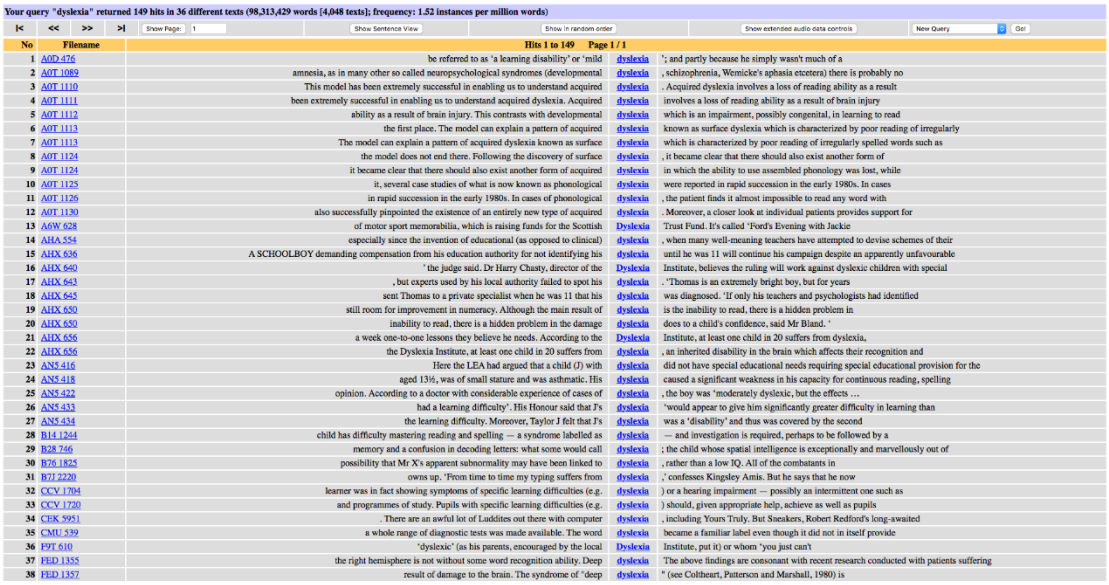
Concordance

Concordance data is used alongside keyness data to enable the researcher to identify patterns that are apparent within the corpus. Concordance data is ‘a list of all the occurrences of a particular search term, presented within the context that they occur in’ (Baker, 2006b, p. 71) and is sometimes referred to as a Key Word in Context (KWIC). Concordance data can be used to investigate sematic preference and prosody which can highlight the social issues that a particular word/phrase is associated with within the corpus (Mautner, 2016). Indeed, McEnery and Hardie (2011, p. 35) argue that concordance data is the most important tool available to a corpus linguist.

Again, in this study Wordsmith 7.0 has been used to produce concordance data from the corpora constructed. A concordance program searches a corpus for a selected word, which is called the node word. The program presents the node word in the centre of the screen with the context in which it appears in the corpus to the left and right of the word. This is illustrated in

Figure 9 below where the node word ‘dyslexia’ was searched in the British National Corpus (BNC).

Figure 9: A sample of concordance data from the BNC using the node word ‘dyslexia’



Your query "dyslexia" returned 149 hits in 36 different texts (98,313,429 words [4,048 texts]; frequency: 1.52 instances per million words)

|< << >> >| Show Page: 1 Show Sentence View Show in random order Show extended audio data controls New Query Go!

No	Filename	Hits 1 to 149 Page 1 / 1		
1	A0D 476	be referred to as 'a learning disability' or 'mild	dyslexia	'; and partly because he simply wasn't much of a
2	A0T 1089	amnesia, as in many other so called neuropsychological syndromes (developmental	dyslexia	, schizophrenia, Wernicke's aphasia etcetera) there is probably no
3	A0T 1110	This model has been extremely successful in enabling us to understand acquired	dyslexia	. Acquired dyslexia involves a loss of reading ability as a result
4	A0T 1111	been extremely successful in enabling us to understand acquired dyslexia. Acquired	dyslexia	involves a loss of reading ability as a result of brain injury
5	A0T 1112	ability as a result of brain injury. This contrasts with developmental	dyslexia	which is an impairment, possibly congenital, in learning to read
6	A0T 1113	the first place. The model can explain a pattern of acquired	dyslexia	known as surface dyslexia which is characterized by poor reading of irregularly
7	A0T 1113	The model can explain a pattern of acquired dyslexia known as surface	dyslexia	which is characterized by poor reading of irregularly spelled words such as
8	A0T 1124	the model does not end there. Following the discovery of surface	dyslexia	, it became clear that there should also exist another form of
9	A0T 1124	it became clear that there should also exist another form of acquired	dyslexia	in which the ability to use assembled phonology was lost, while
10	A0T 1125	it, several case studies of what is now known as phonological	dyslexia	were reported in rapid succession in the early 1980s. In cases
11	A0T 1126	in rapid succession in the early 1980s. In cases of phonological	dyslexia	, the patient finds it almost impossible to read any word with
12	A0T 1130	also successfully pinpointed the existence of an entirely new type of acquired	dyslexia	. Moreover, a closer look at individual patients provides support for
13	A6W 628	of motor sport memorabilia, which is raising funds for the Scottish	Dyslexia	Trust Fund. It's called 'Ford's Evening with Jackie
14	AHA 554	especially since the invention of educational (as opposed to clinical)	dyslexia	, when many well-meaning teachers have attempted to devise schemes of their
15	AHX 636	A SCHOOLBOY demanding compensation from his education authority for not identifying his	dyslexia	until he was 11 will continue his campaign despite an apparently unfavourable
16	AHX 640	' the judge said. Dr Harry Chasty, director of the	Dyslexia	Institute, believes the ruling will work against dyslexic children with special
17	AHX 643	, but experts used by his local authority failed to spot his	dyslexia	. 'Thomas is an extremely bright boy, but for years
18	AHX 645	sent Thomas to a private specialist when he was 11 that his	dyslexia	was diagnosed. 'If only his teachers and psychologists had identified
19	AHX 650	still room for improvement in numeracy. Although the main result of	dyslexia	is the inability to read, there is a hidden problem in
20	AHX 650	inability to read, there is a hidden problem in the damage	dyslexia	does to a child's confidence, said Mr Bland. '
21	AHX 656	a week one-to-one lessons they believe he needs. According to the	Dyslexia	Institute, at least one child in 20 suffers from dyslexia,
22	AHX 656	the Dyslexia Institute, at least one child in 20 suffers from	dyslexia	, an inherited disability in the brain which affects their recognition and
23	AN5 416	Here the LEA had argued that a child (J) with	dyslexia	did not have special educational needs requiring special educational provision for the
24	AN5 418	aged 13½, was of small stature and was asthmatic. His	dyslexia	caused a significant weakness in his capacity for continuous reading, spelling
25	AN5 422	opinion. According to a doctor with considerable experience of cases of	dyslexia	, the boy was 'moderately dyslexic, but the effects ...
26	AN5 433	had a learning difficulty'. His Honour said that J's	dyslexia	'would appear to give him significantly greater difficulty in learning than
27	AN5 434	the learning difficulty. Moreover, Taylor J felt that J's	dyslexia	was a 'disability' and thus was covered by the second
28	B14 1244	child has difficulty mastering reading and spelling — a syndrome labelled as	dyslexia	— and investigation is required, perhaps to be followed by a
29	B28 746	memory and a confusion in decoding letters: what some would call	dyslexia	; the child whose spatial intelligence is exceptionally and marvellously out of
30	B76 1825	possibility that Mr X's apparent subnormality may have been linked to	dyslexia	, rather than a low IQ. All of the combatants in
31	B7J 2220	owns up. 'From time to time my typing suffers from	dyslexia	,' confesses Kingsley Amis. But he says that he now
32	CCV 1704	learner was in fact showing symptoms of specific learning difficulties (e.g.	dyslexia	) or a hearing impairment — possibly an intermittent one such as
33	CCV 1720	and programmes of study. Pupils with specific learning difficulties (e.g.	dyslexia	) should, given appropriate help, achieve as well as pupils
34	CEK 5951	. There are an awful lot of Luddites out there with computer	dyslexia	, including Yours Truly. But Sneakers, Robert Redford's long-awaited
35	CMU 539	a whole range of diagnostic tests was made available. The word	dyslexia	became a familiar label even though it did not in itself provide
36	F9T 610	'dyslexic' (as his parents, encouraged by the local	Dyslexia	Institute, put it) or whom 'you just can't
37	FED 1355	the right hemisphere is not without some word recognition ability. Deep	dyslexia	The above findings are consonant with recent research conducted with patients suffering
38	FED 1357	result of damage to the brain. The syndrome of "deep	dyslexia	" (see Coltheart, Patterson and Marshall, 1980) is

Concordance data is useful for investigating discourses in newspaper data as it can reveal repeated discourses over time. As Fairclough (2015, p. 82) argues:

> The hidden power of media discourse and the capacity of the capitalist class and other power-holders to exercise this power depend on systematic tendencies in news reporting and other media activities. A single text on its own is quite insignificant: the effects of media power are cumulative, working through the repetition of particular ways of handling causality and agency, particular ways of positioning the reader, and so forth.

In other words, investigating the language used in newspapers using concordance data to discuss a particular topic like dyslexia, can reveal patterns of discourse. This is done by looking at semantic and discourse prosodies. Semantic prosody is the ‘consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates’ (Louw, 1993, p. 157) and discourse prosody is ‘a feature which extends over more than one unit in a linear string’

(Stubbs, 2001, pp. 111-112). Therefore, discourse and semantic prosodies can highlight patterns of discourse between a word or phrase, with discourse prosody revealing attitudes of authors/newspapers. These two concepts can be therefore used as a lens to investigate the discourse surrounding dyslexia in the media.

As recommended by Stubbs (1999), concordance data in this study was analysed by selecting 30 lines of concordance data at random (Wordsmith 7.0 allows the concordance data to be randomised automatically), noting any patterns then selecting another 30 lines and so forth until nothing new is revealed.

One of the limitations with using concordance data is that there is often too much data to handle manually (Hunston, 2002). This can be overcome by also carrying out collocation analysis which helps to summarise concordance information.

Collocation

Collocation shows the co-occurrence relationship between words or phrases and can process large quantities of data. Collocation, as defined by Sinclair (1991, p. 170), is ‘the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text’ and he proposed a span of five words either side of the node. However, since all words co-occur with one another to a certain degree, we need to find out if the relationship between the two words in question is statistically significant. Collocation tests the significance of the co-occurrence frequency of the node word and the surrounding words/phrases in the corpus. For this study, the log-likelihood test will be used as the significance test to see whether or not the collocation is statistically significant. The log-likelihood (LL) test makes no assumption of a normal distribution which is important in CL because typically the data within a

corpus are not distributed around the mean and this is why the LL test is used often in CL (Dunning, 1993).

Brezina et al. (2015) identify three criteria for identifying collocates within a corpus. These are: distance, frequency and exclusivity. Distance specifies the span around the node word and is known as the collocation window. As stated earlier, in this study the collocation window is five. Frequency refers to the typicality of the word association and exclusivity refers to the degree that a word is always associated with the node word. These three criteria have been applied in the collocational analysis of the data in this study.

Collocation in this study has been used to show the meanings and understandings in the media surrounding dyslexia. As (Stubbs, 1996, p. 172) argues ‘words occur in characteristic colocations, which show the associations and connotations they have, and therefore the assumptions which they embody.’ Therefore, it could be argued that collocations have the ability to show salient discourses about dyslexia and that by comparing lists of the strongest collocates in specialist and non-specialist media, we can obtain an idea of the differences and similarities in the ways in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject are constructed in these two types of media.

#LancsBox (Brezina et al., 2015; Brezina, Timperley, & McEnery, 2018; Brezina, Weill-Tessier, & McEnery, 2020) software package was employed to analyse the collocation data for this thesis as it enables the researcher to display the collocations as a graph/network. The parameters were used are shown in **Table 3** (below).

Table 3: **Parameters used in Lancsbox software**

Statistic ID	Statistic Name	Statistic cut-off value	L and R span	Minimum collocate frequency (C)	Minimum collocation frequency (NC)	Filter
0.3	MI	3	L5-R5	100		None
03=MI(3), L5-R5, C100-NC100						

These parameters were selected to produce a graph which was not overpopulated and produced a more manageable amount of data to be investigated.

5.5.2 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

The CL analysis discussed in the previous section (5.5.1) were combined with FDA in this thesis. This section will outline the seven steps used to apply FDA to the data in this study.

Since Foucault does not offer a prescriptive methodology to follow, this thesis will use the structed framework offered by G. Rose (2001) which has been informed by the work of Foucault. The first step outlined by G. Rose (2001) is to try and forget any preconceptions about the materials you are studying. This follows the work of Foucault (1972a, p. 25) who states that pre-existing categories ‘must be held in suspense. They must not be rejected definitively, of course, but the tranquilly with which they are accepted must be disturbed; We must be sure that they do not come about by themselves, but are always the result of a construction the rules of which must be known and justifications of which must be scrutinised.’ the corpus linguistic analysis will aid this step as during the analysis a lot of the words are taken out of the context of the original text in order to be counted to establish common discourses within the data. The words are then put back into context for a

more detailed analysis. This means that the article type and sourced information is not at the forefront during the whole analysis but rather taken into consideration at later points in the research.

The second step outlined by G. Rose (2001) is to become familiar with your texts in order to identify key themes. For this thesis, this step of familiarisation will be carried out in two stages: firstly, during the process of building the corpora from scratch and secondly during the corpus linguistic analysis. Both stages will allow the researcher to become very familiar with the data and identify any themes that are running across the different newspaper items within the corpora.

The third step outlined by G. Rose (2001) is more systematic. She recommends coding to identify key themes to reveal how the producer of discourse is embedded within discursive structures and it is recommended that these categories are not imposed in a top-down manner but rather the researcher should be open to the unexpected. Again, for this thesis, the coding stage will be carried out during corpus linguistic analysis, mainly during the diachronic keyword analysis stage (see section 5.5.1 for more detail). The coding stage was used to think about the connections between different words and themes within the research. Clusters of words and connections between them will give an indication of the broader context of discourse. This step then leads to the fourth step outlined by G. Rose (2001) which is to examine the effects of truth. Within this research, the different regimes of truth about dyslexia presented in specialist and non-specialist media will be explored by using examples drawn out of the corpora, identified during the corpus linguistic analysis and themes identified in the earlier stages of both the corpus linguistics part of the study as well as the earlier steps in the FDA.

The fifth step in the framework by G. Rose (2001) is the investigation of the complexity and contradictions within the differing discourses presented in the data. Again, the corpus linguistics element of this study will help to identify the complexity and the contradictions data present within the data. The FDA will then be used to explore this complexity and any contradictions examples drawn from the corpora. For example, there may be contradictions in the newspaper items that are reporting research that has been conducted in academia with those newspaper items that all focused on a particular celebrity who has dyslexia and their own personal experience as a dyslexic subject. In terms of complexity, a wide range of different discourses is expected to be present within the corpora (i.e., educational discourse, medical discourse, special educational needs discourse, celebrity discourse) this alone will add complexity to the social construction of dyslexia that is being portrayed within the media in the UK. Another aspect of complexity that will be addressed within the FDA element of this study is what Potter (1996) termed 'interpretive repertoire'. Potter (1996, p. 131) defines interpretive repertoires as:

> systematically related sets of terms that are often used with stylistic and grammatical coherence and often organized around one or more central metaphors. They develop historically and make up an important part of the 'common sense' of a culture, although some are specific to institutional domains. (Potter, 1996, p. 131)

In other words, Potter notes that interpretive repertoire is are like mini discourses (G. Rose, 2001) which are specific to particular social situations. The example Potter gives is how scientists use different techniques in published research papers to justify their own arguments and discoveries will use a different technique when informally discussing their own research. In this case two different interpretive repertoires are used and both their make up a part of a complex discourse of scientific truth. In this research, the FDA will explore these many discourses to find out how the media construct a complex discourse of truth about dyslexia.

The sixth step in the FDA framework created by G. Rose (2001, p. 214) is to ‘pay attention to the invisible as well as the visible’ as ‘ invisibility can have just as powerful effects as visibility’. This part of the FDA is therefore focused on who gets to produce the discourse around a particular topic, in this instance dyslexia. Looking at the key players (i.e., those names of people who appear in keyword lists during the keyword analysis) will give an indication of who's voice is present within the corpora and who's is absent. It will be interesting to find out to what extent people with dyslexia are marginalised within the discourse surrounding dyslexia in UK media.

The final step outlined by G. Rose (2001) is paying attention to detail. This step is influenced by Gill (1996, p. 144) who argued that ‘the analysis of discourse and rhetoric requires the careful reading and interpretation of texts, rigorous scholarship rather than adherence to formal procedures.’ I would argue to a certain degree that, a lot of this step will be completed due in the corpus linguistic analysis whereby detail is really important. During the FDA the examples pulled from the corpus will be analysed in detail in terms of how they represent the themes identified in the research process as well as how they show the truths being represented by the media about dyslexia. The steps outlined in this section are summarised appendix 7.

In addition to the framework discussed above, this research will also follow the work of Barker-Ruchti (2009) who used FDA to investigate the media as an authorising practice of femininity, this thesis will analyse newspaper coverage of dyslexia on the three levels outlined above by Foucault (1972a). It will investigate:

1. the articles’ individual statements,
2. the statements that form the concept of dyslexia and their possible meanings

3. the discourses these statements draw on and reinforce (such as medical discourse).

This section has discussed the fact that Foucault did not present a prescribed methodology as this would go against what Foucault stood for. Therefore, this research will follow the framework set out by rose in order to carry out the FDA element of this study. It is important to note that, even though the corpus linguistics analysis and the FDA have been discussed separately, they have been carried out together and used to complement one another (see section 5.3 for further information). An example of how these steps have been applied can be found in appendix 7.

5.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this thesis was granted by Durham University School of Education Ethics Committee before any research was carried out as part of this project. The Durham University ethics guidelines (Durham University, 2018) were also adhered to throughout this research.

The dataset which was collected and analysed for this study consisted solely of publicly accessible, published texts and therefore, involves no contact with human subjects. In terms of confidentially and anonymity, the newspaper articles which form the dataset for this study are available online via LexisNexis. Additionally, many newspaper articles appear online in some format. This could potentially mean that any phrase or headline within a newspaper article which is used as part of this study could be easily found and identified online due to the public nature of newspaper articles. This is especially likely because whole phrases/headlines will be analysed. Therefore, I will be naming my sources within this study as I believe that using pseudonyms would be unproductive. Furthermore, newspaper articles are subjected to UK copyright law which means that any extracts or quotations presented in this thesis will have to be cited fully making it impossible to anonymise the newspaper.

The UK Intellectual Property Office introduced a new copyright exception in 2014 which is relevant to this study. The new exception covers using material for the purpose of computational analysis if the material is lawfully accessed. This exception states that researchers are allowed 'to make copies of any copyright material for the purpose of computational analysis if they already have the right to read the work (that is, work that they have "lawful access" to). They will be able to do this without having to obtain additional permission to make these copies from the rights holder' (Intellectual Property Office, 2014, p. 6). Therefore, for this thesis, permission from each newspaper to use their material is not necessary under UK law.

5.7 Summary

This chapter has given a detailed explanation of the research method employed for this study. It has given the theoretical background about the combination of a Foucauldian FDA and CL giving the advantages and disadvantages of combining these two methods in triangulation. The search method and how the data has been collected from LexisNexis has been outlined giving information about how the corpora were built for this study. Following this, a detailed explanation of the methods of analysis for both the FDA and CL elements of the study were provided. Finally, the ethical considerations were discussed. A summary of the stages of research are outlined in appendix 8.

6 An overview of the final corpora

This chapter will present the findings from the corpora constructed for this thesis, providing an overview of the final corpora. It will give a detailed breakdown of the NSMC and SMC, discussing the number of articles in each corpora, types of news items, newsbrands and online and offline news items.

For this study, a corpus was designed using newspaper items which related to dyslexia between 1975 and 2017. The main corpus was then split into two separate corpora; one containing news items from specialist media (targeted at educational professionals) and the other from the general media (non-specialist media). The final corpus totalled 7,793,561 words and 8283 texts. The way these texts are distributed between the two final sub-corpora is summarised in **Table 4** (below) which shows the differences between the specialist media (henceforth SMC) and non-specialist media (henceforth NSMC) sub-corpora.

Table 4: Number of words and articles in the corpora

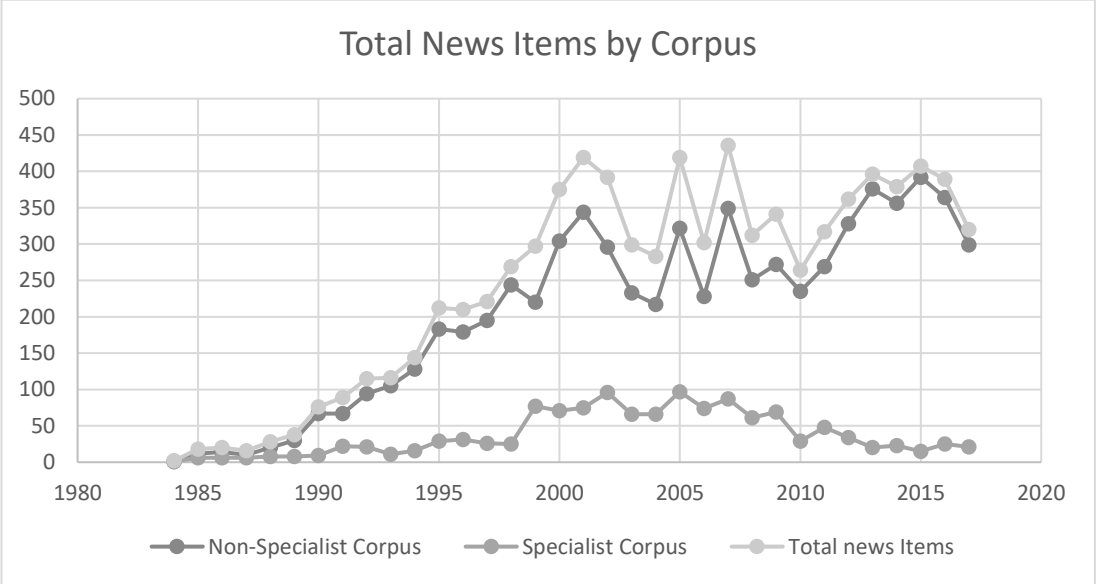
	News items		Words	
	Total	% of corpus	Total	% of corpus
NSMC	7004	85	6,898,808	89
SMC	1279	15	894,753	11
Totals	8283	100	7,793,561	100

Most of the news items in the final corpus were from the printed editions of the newspapers with only 10% (771) being online. This is due to the way in which the data was selected – if a news item was duplicated with one appearing in print and the other online, the print version was selected to maintain consistency throughout the data collection process. A breakdown of online/offline news items included in the final corpora can be found in Appendix 9.

Overall, the trend for news items regarding dyslexia has increased between 1975 and 2017. In 1975 there were zero newspaper items regarding dyslexia and at its peak in 2007 there were 436. This is shown in Figure 10 (below).

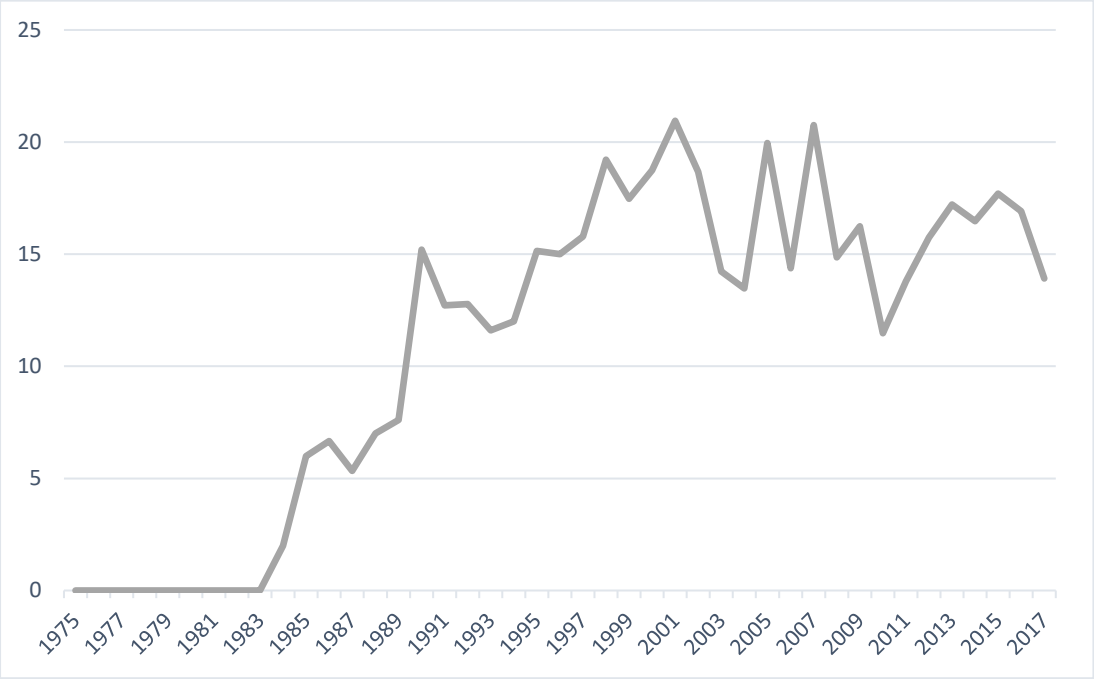
However, as can be seen from this figure, this increase has not been constant and the reporting of news items concerning dyslexia has gone through several peaks and troughs.

Figure 10: Total news items by corpus



It is important to note that some of the increase in data between 1975 and 2017 will be due to the higher availability of data as more newspaper articles are archived and available online in LexisNexis (2017). Additionally, I do acknowledge that there is missing data within the final sample due to some newspapers not being available in LexisNexis for certain years (see 5.4.2 for further discussion). Therefore, in order to mediate the missing data (and following Baker et al. (2013, p. 49)) changes in frequency over time have been calculated by taking the average number of articles across the newspapers that were available for collection during each year. For example, in 1985 there were three newspapers available in the corpus (The Guardian, The Times and The Sunday Times) and there were eighteen articles so on average there were 6 newspapers items about dyslexia in 1985 (18/3 = 6). This is shown graphically in **Figure 11** (below).

Figure 11: Average frequency of newspaper items per year



As can be seen by Figure 11 (above) there are clear frequency spikes where news items about dyslexia have increased over time. Taking the average frequency scores, 2001 and 2007 have the highest number of news items in the corpus. To establish the diachronic development of newspaper coverage of the topic of dyslexia, frequency spikes were examined for local and international events related to dyslexia, the wide reporting of which may have caused the increase in articles. The number of news items was plotted by month and examining the news items in these spikes to establish any discursive events. The plots are shown in **Figure 12** (below) and **Table 5** (below) shows the main discursive events found as part of this analysis. Some of these discursive events were analysed during the corpus linguistic analysis and investigated using a Foucauldian theoretical lens.

Figure 12: Peak years in corpora

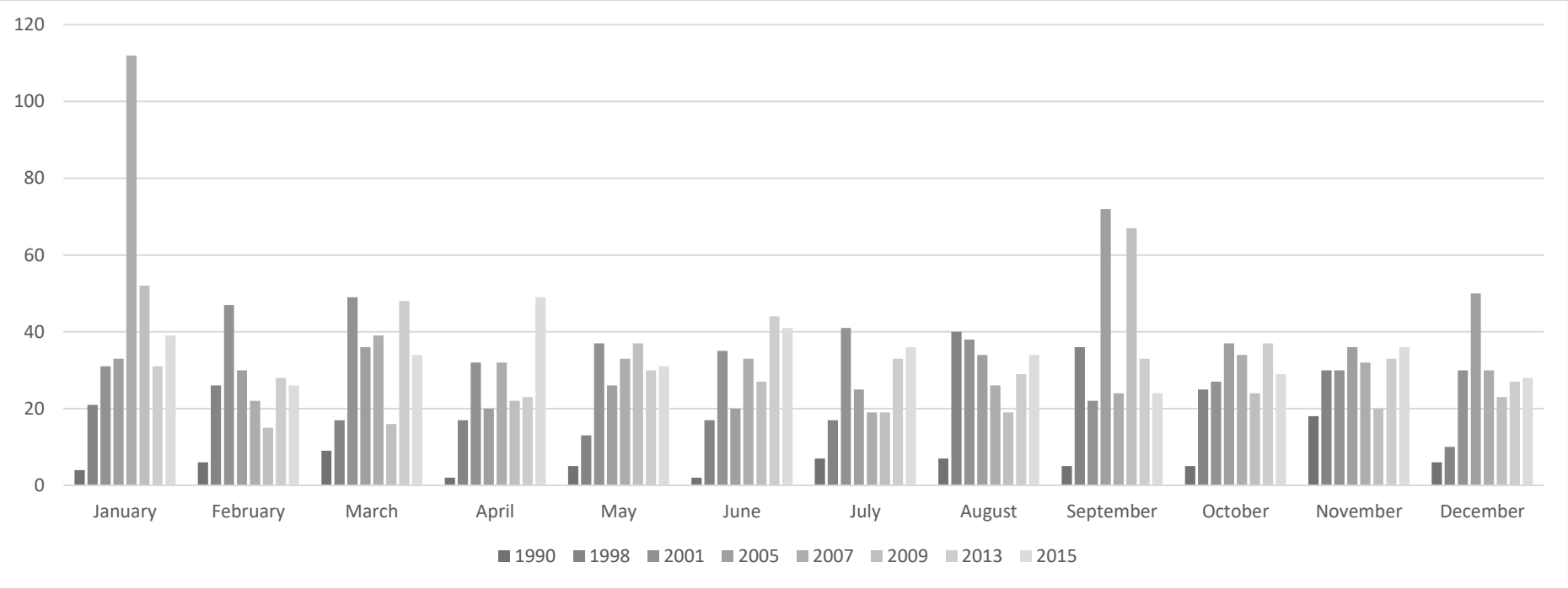


Table 5: Discursive events in the corpora

Year	1990	1998	2001	2005	2007	2009	2013	2015
Event	Leadership contest for Tory party (Michael Heseltine)	Alexander Faludy court case for funding	MP Neil Turner corrects letter sent by dyslexic constituent	Julian Elliott and the dyslexia debate	Ruth Kelly (former education minister takes son out of state education	Pilkington Case	Jamie Oliver and reading	Death of Keith Harris

Table 6 (below) summarises the final corpus and sub-corpora by newspaper type. The figure shows that the SMC consists of mostly news items from supplements which is to be expected. However, most of the NSMC consists of news items from broadsheet newspapers. This was not surprising as there was more data available from broadsheets compared with the other newspaper types.

Table 6: **Number of articles in each sub-corpora by newspaper type**

	Total Corpora		NSMC		SMC	
Newspaper Type	No.	% of corpus	No.	% of corpus	No.	% of corpus
Broadsheets	3611	44	3162	45	449	35
Compacts	867	10	826	12	41	3
Tabloids	3001	36	2929	42	72	6
Freesheets	87	1	87	1	0	0
Supplements	717	9	0	0	717	56
Total	8283	100	7004	100	1279	100

The newspaper title with the highest number of news items across both corpora is *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* newspapers with a total of 1598 (19%). The lowest newspaper title is *City AM* with a total of 8 (0.09%). A further summary of the number of articles by newspaper title can be found in **Table 7** (below). These findings contrast with those from PAMCo (2020) which show that the post popular news title in the UK is *The Sun* and *The Sun on Sunday* which is predominately read by manual workers (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled) and those who are unemployed and on the lowest

wages in the UK who are aged between the age of 16 and 24. Additionally, *The Sun on Sunday* also has a high proportion of readers from ethnic minority groups (Busa, 2014, p. 14). In contrast, the second most popular newspaper in the UK, *The Mail on Sunday*, is predominately read by people over the age of 65 (27%) and in the highest social classes (OFCOM, 2018, p. 44). They also have the highest proportion of non-ethnic minority readers. The report from OFCOM also found that '16-24s are more likely than those aged 65+ to read more of the titles. Those aged 65+ are more likely than 16-24s to read the Daily Mail and The Mail on Sunday' (OFCOM, 2018, p. 39). J. Richardson (2007) and Worcester (1998) both comment that 25% of people from the UK who buy and read newspapers own 88% of the wealth and those reading tabloids (50%) only own 2% of the wealth. This makes tabloids less attractive to advertisers. This difference between the data presented in PAMCo and the data found within this thesis in terms of the most popular newspaper brand could be to do with the fact that *The Times* readership consists of 4.7 million households containing children (Watson, 2021). Therefore, education would be an area of interest to this large group of readers.

Table 7: Full Corpus by newspaper title

Newspaper Type	Newspaper Title	Total Number
Broadsheets	The Guardian	970
	The Independent and The Independent on Sunday	819
	The Daily Telegraph and the Sunday Telegraph	770
	The Observer	255
	The Business	8
Compacts	I	58
	The Times and The Sunday Times	1598
Tabloids	Daily Mail and The Mail on Sunday	1236
	The Daily Mirror and The Sunday Mirror	716
	The Sun and The Sun on Sunday	437
	The Daily Express and The Sunday Express	415
	The Daily Star and The Sunday Star	134
	The People	63
Freesheets	Metro	80

	City UK	7
Supplements	TES	619
	THE	98

Figure 13 (below) shows that there are more features (soft news) than news items (hard news) within the final corpora. The ‘not stated’ category is due to LexisNexis not providing the information with regards to what category the news item was taken from. This appears more often in the earlier years of the corpus and by 2006 there are no news items without a category.

Figure 13: Corpora by news item type

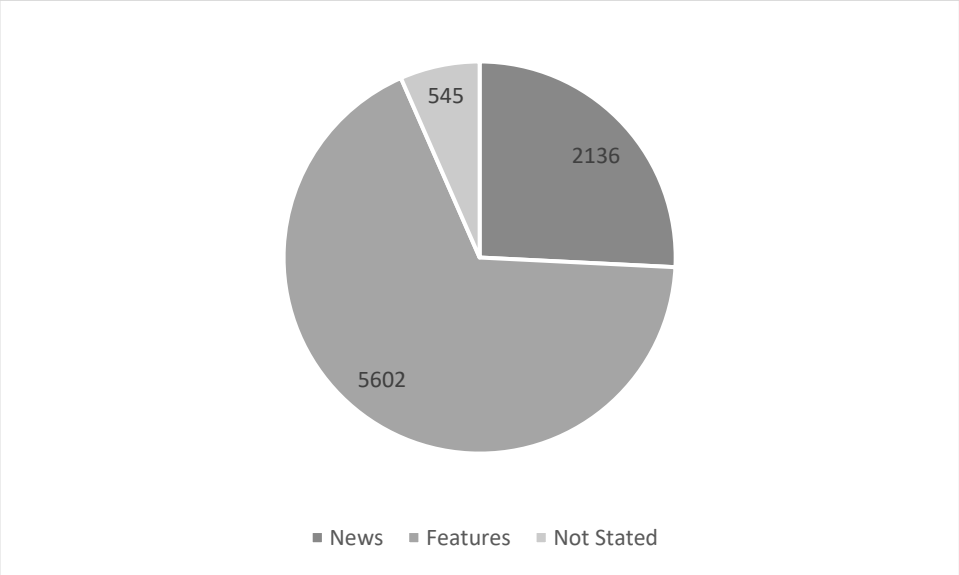


Figure 14 and **Figure 15** (below) show a breakdown of the different features in each of the sub-corpora. The charts show that general features are the most common in both corpora. In the NSMC, the second highest type of feature is sport. Indeed, in the NSMC the majority of features centre around famous people who have dyslexia, and this is reflected in the number of articles about sport, TV, film and arts found within the corpora. This high number of celebrity feature types could be due to the fact that these types of features satisfy two of the news values set out by Harcup and O'Neill (2001); namely celebrity and entertainment. From a Foucauldian perspective this is an example of how the media use recurring themes to establish a particular truth or narrative about a topic. This theme of the dyslexic celebrity and the

language used to construct the dyslexic celebrity will be investigated further as the study progresses. Within the SMC, letters are the second highest type of feature. This means that there are many subjects who are not reporters and have a vested interest in education or dyslexia whose views appear within the specialist corpus in the form of letters.

Figure 14: Feature types: specialist corpus

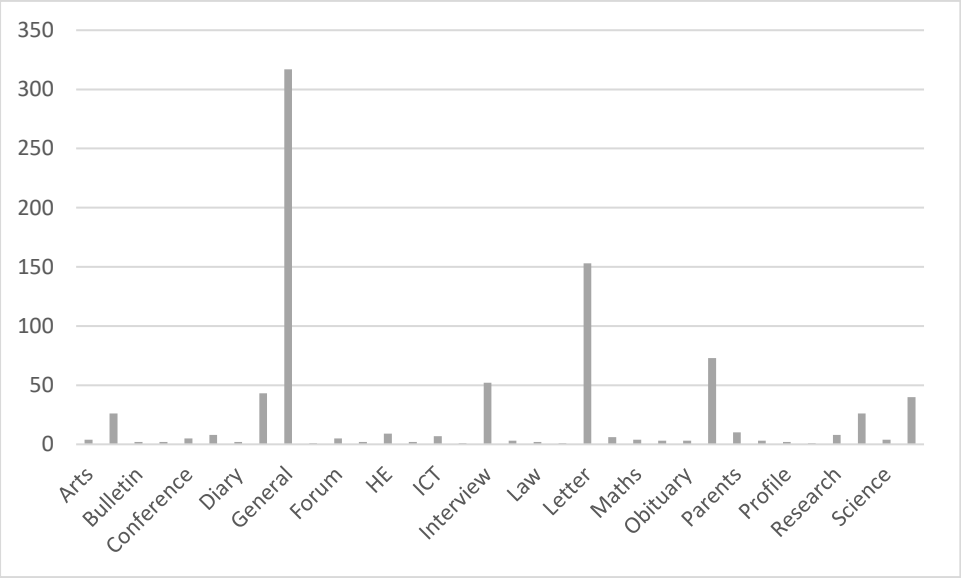
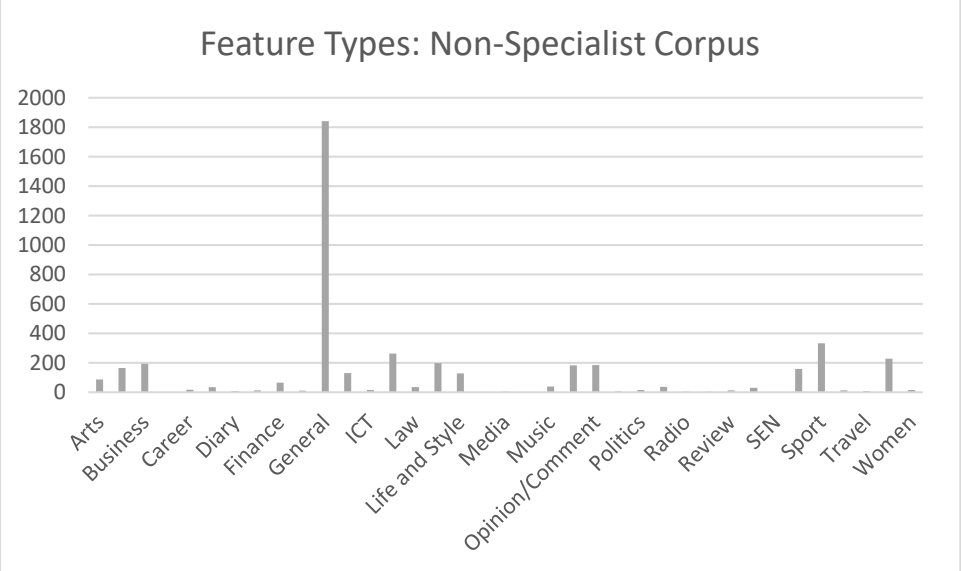


Figure 15: Feature types: Non-specialist corpus



In the BNC 40% of words that appeared within the frequency word list were hapax legomena (Scott & Tribble, 2006, p. 11). A similar pattern can be found with regards to my own corpora where 38% of the frequency words are hapax legomena. Some of the hapax legomena within the NSMC and SMC were snowboard, manky, jotter, Kellogg, offspring, Youtuber, Neptune and neatest.

Initially, the frequency word analysis in this research was used to compare the two sub-corpora to investigate how frequent the word *dyslexia* is across the corpora and see how evenly distributed the topic of dyslexia is within the corpora. In the full corpus *dyslexia* occurs 13,659 times and has a dispersion of 0.82. Dispersion is a measure that investigates the degree to which a word is distributed throughout a corpus, telling the researcher how evenly a word is distributed (Gries, 2019). A dispersion rate of 0.82 therefore shows that word dyslexia is evenly distributed throughout the corpus and not concentrated to one or two separate texts. **Table 8** (below) shows the breakdown of the frequencies of the words *dyslexia* and *dyslexic* in each of the sub-corpora. The raw frequency as well as the normalized frequencies are shown for comparability.

Table 8: **Frequencies of 'dyslexia' and 'dyslexic'**

	SMC			NSMC		
Word	Raw frequency	Dispersion	Normalised frequency	Raw frequency	Dispersion	Normalised frequency
Dyslexia	3799	0.90	425	9860	0.97	143
Dyslexic	1944	0.90	217	6464	0.97	94

This chapter has provided an overview of the final corpora which were constructed as part of this thesis. It has also discussed the dispersion rate of the words *dyslexia* and *dyslexic* across the NSMC and the SMC. The following chapter will discuss how homogeneous the two corpora are and

provide a comparison on how dyslexia and the dyslexic subject have been constructed within the SMC and NSMC.

7 A comparison of how the dyslexia and the dyslexic subject is constructed within the NSMC and SMC

The focus of this chapter is to find out how homogeneous the two corpora are in their treatment of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. A combination of corpus linguistic techniques has been used such as the investigation of frequency word lists and keyword analysis.

The first step in investigating how the dyslexic subject and the topic of dyslexia has been constructed within the NSMC and SMC was to carry out a frequency word analysis and analyse the top ten frequency words in each of the corpora. This follows the work of Baker (2010a). By comparing both top key frequencies in each corpus, an indication of how homogeneous the two corpora are in their treatment of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject can be sought. The data from the frequency word analysis can be found in

Table 9 (below).

Table 9: Top 10 word frequencies in the SMC and NSMC corpora

	SMC				NSMC			
No.	Word	Raw frequency	%	Dispersion	Word	Raw frequency	%	Dispersion
1	The	41,613	4.65	0.99	The	311,003	4.51	0.99
2	To	27,123	3.03	0.99	A	187,086	2.71	1.00
3	And	23,989	2.68	0.99	To	175,493	2.69	1.00
4	Of	22,520	2.52	0.99	And	181,051	2.62	0.99
5	And	21,674	2.42	0.99	Of	154,470	2.24	0.99
6	In	16,406	1.83	0.99	In	126,706	1.84	1.00
7	Is	10,942	1.22	0.97	In	100,231	1.45	0.98
8	For	10,074	1.13	0.98	He	84,266	1.22	0.98
9	That	9,704	1.08	0.98	Was	83,513	1.21	0.99

10	Which	7,927	0.89	0.99		That	70,194	1.02	0.99

Table 9 (above) shows that across both corpora function words that are the most common which is to be expected. Although there are subtle differences, the top ten frequency words across both sub-corpora are remarkably similar. Nevertheless, because most of the high frequency words are function words this finding is needed to be treat with caution; the conclusion that the two corpora are homogeneous cannot be claimed using this data, thus more investigation is needed. However, there are three remarkably interesting findings within this data. Namely the presence of the pronoun *he* which will be discussed in section 0, the presence of the verbs *says* and *said* and the presence of the verb *was* which will both be discussed in section 0.

The second step in investigating how homogeneous the NSMC and SMC are to one another was to look at the main lexical differences between the two.

This was done by producing a keyword list looking at the top 50 keywords for each corpus and comparing a wordlist of the SMC against the NSMC (and vice versa). Keywords which are remarkably similar have been avoided. For example, for teacher and teachers I have only listed teachers as it is the keyword that has the highest LL score. The top 50 keywords for each of the two corpora are listed in appendix 10.

To explore the keywords in more detail, these keywords were then categorised into groups based on theme by carrying out a concordance analysis for each word in the keyword list. This follows the work by Baker and McGlashan (2020). Additionally, to aid the sorting of keywords into theme, the clusters function which looks at 'patterns of repeated phraseology' in concordance data' (Scott, 2018) in Wordsmith 7.0 was used for speed of analysis due to the volume of data in the corpus.

Although the keywords in appendix 10 appear out of context, it is possible at this stage to discern some differences in these salient terms relating dyslexia. A comparison of the keyword tables (appendix 10) shows that there are no shared keywords in the top 50. Comparing these results with other studies such as Baker and McGlashan (2020) who had 19 shared keywords in the top 50, and Hunt and Harvey (2015) who had 4 shared keywords in the top 20, this seems to be unusual. An overlap would be expected since the topic of both corpora is dyslexia. Indeed, there are no shared keywords in the two corpora. Therefore, it appears that the two corpora are not homogeneous and indeed construct dyslexia in vastly different ways, drawing on different types of discourses. The keywords in the SMC are all from educational discourse, whereas the keywords in the NSMC are more mixed and surprisingly have no association with education. In fact, words associated with education such as school, pupils, teaching, are negative keywords (see **Table 10** below). This means that they are unusually infrequent when compared to the SMC.

Table 10: Negative keywords compared to NSMC

Word	Negative keyness (log-likelihood)
NEEDS	-1,988.59
TEACHING	-2,028.54
DYSLEXIA	-2,700.89
LEARNING	-2,783.56
CHILDREN	-3,191.23
TEACHERS	-3,400.25
SCHOOLS	-3,634.19
STUDENTS	-3,771.16
EDUCATION	-4,160.78
PUPILS	-4,846.09

To investigate whether the SMC constructed education and state schools in a similar way, a concordance analysis was carried out for *school*. School was found 5199 times in the SMC in 926 texts. The top cluster for school in the SMC was ‘of the school’ with 83 instances. On further inspection, the concordance revealed that *school* was only referred to as an educational setting and gave no further insight to the way in which dyslexia is constructed. The concordance analysis of *school* in the NSMC is discussed in the following section where it describes how schools and the education system have been constructed as a site of failure. However, I would argue that this does show further that the SMC and NSMC construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject in different ways.

A further notable difference between the two corpora is the absence of the word *dyslexia* in the NSMC keyword list which could suggest other ways of

referring to *dyslexia* in this corpus. Notably, *dyslexic* is absent from both the tables but does appear in the full keyword list (NSMC at number 401, SMC at number 85). How the words *dyslexia* and *dyslexic* are used within the corpora is explored further in the collocation analysis.

To explore the lexical differences between the SMC and the NSMC further the negative keywords were investigated for the NSMC (and are displayed in **Table 10** (above) with the negative keywords for the SMC appearing in **Table 11** (below). The words that appear within these tables are unusually infrequent in the NSMC compared with the SMC and vice versa.

Table 11: Negative keywords in the SMC

Word	Negative keyness (log-likelihood)
ME	-596.94
I'M	-616.17
MAN	-667.33
SHE	-869.13
HIM	-940.36
HER	-1,364.75
WAS	-2,096.43
I	-2,285.12
HIS	-3,339.12

HE	-4,095.03

As **Table 11** (above) shows, most of the negative keywords in the SMC are pronouns indicating that the NSMC discusses dyslexia more from the point of view of the subject than the SMC. This is supported by the analysis of *said* and *says* in section 0 which discussed the high number of reports by professors, teachers and headteachers in the SMC compared to the dyslexic subjects themselves. Furthermore, a concordance analysis of the pronoun *he* shows a high collocate with both *says* and *sai*d indicating that the views of male dyslexics are sought more than female dyslexics (see discussion in section 0) at least within the NSMC. The fact that *man* is the top keyword in the NSMC also supports this finding.

It is important to note, that even though the keywords in (see appendix 10) are different, all the keywords in the SMC do appear in the NSMC (and vice versa), they are just not all keywords. Nevertheless, there is one exception: the word ‘wedding’ which appears in then NSMC but not in the SMC. On further investigation, *wedding* occurs 601 times and in 367 texts in the NSMC. A collocate analysis reveals that the words *royal* and *anniversary* are among the top collocates of *wedding* and a concordance analysis supports this finding and reveals that most of the instances of wedding are related to celebrities with dyslexia getting married or celebrating a wedding anniversary (e.g., Holly Willoughby, Jamie Oliver, Richard Branson). This indicates that the NSMC constructs dyslexia with repeated reference to celebrities with dyslexia which adds to the impression that dyslexia is a gift and strongly linked with creativity, entrepreneurship, and success. This is discussed further in section 0.

The final step in the investigation of the similarities and differences across the SMC and NSMC in the ways they construct the dyslexic subject and dyslexia was to carry out a diachronic keyword analysis (see chapter 5). The

total number of keywords used for the analysis in the SMC (excluding the negative keywords) was 640 and the NSMC was 667. This is summarised in **Table 12** (below). The only keywords excluded from the final keyword analysis were numbers and the hashtag symbol which were removed from the keyword lists as they did not reveal anything about the content of the corpus.

Table 12: Total number of keywords in the final diachronic analysis in the SMC and NSMC

	SMC				NSMC			
Year	Number of keywords	Number of negative keywords	Number of exclusions	Total number in final analysis	Number of keywords	Number of negative keywords	Number of exclusions	Total number in final analysis
1984	2	0	0	2	9	0	0	9
1985	6	0	0	6	46	4	3	39
1986	17	1	0	16	36	4	1	31
1987	12	0	1	11	24	2	0	22
1988	14	0	0	14	31	3	0	28
1989	14	0	2	12	59	2	1	56
1990	21	2	0	19	78	18	1	59

1991	50	3	1	46	37	7	1	29
1992	31	2	0	29	27	3	3	21
1993	10	0	2	8	20	6	0	14
1994	15	2	0	13	20	6	1	13
1995	33	0	1	32	37	10	5	22
1996	22	0	1	21	37	17	2	18
1997	26	0	0	26	29	6	4	19
1998	25	0	4	21	33	8	3	22
1999	27	4	4	19	9	4	2	3
2000	17	0	1	16	39	9	5	25
2001	11	3	1	7	16	1	3	12
2002	20	3	0	17	9	3	2	4
2003	6	0	0	6	14	1	2	11
2004	11	0	0	11	13	2	1	10

2005	20	0	1	19	6	2	2	2
2006	8	2	1	5	10	0	2	8
2007	10	1	0	9	37	1	4	32
2008	11	0	3	8	13	2	6	5
2009	9	0	0	9	81	5	4	72
2010	46	2	1	43	16	3	4	9
2011	20	1	8	11	26	3	4	19
2012	25	1	0	24	20	9	6	5
2013	24	1	2	21	11	4	1	6
2014	38	0	1	37	23	5	6	12
2015	18	0	0	18	32	11	10	11
2016	59	0	10	49	21	7	9	5
2017	38	3	0	35	31	8	9	14
Totals	716	31	45	640	950	176	107	667

Both diachronic keyword lists were compared for similarity and difference; only 15 words from the SMC also occurred in the NSMC. This reflects the earlier claim that the two corpora are not homogeneous and indeed construct dyslexia in vastly different ways, drawing on different types of discourses. **Table 13** (below) shows the shared diachronic words alongside a description of the shared news reports that they appear in.

Table 13: Shared diachronic keywords in the SMC and NSMC

Keyword	News item keyword appears	Year	Frequency	
			SMC	NSMC
Mr	Several different articles	1990	25	134
Gillian	Gillian Rose obituary	1995	8	21
Blunkett	Blunkett announces funding for SEN	1997	14	25
Pamela	Pamela Phelps sues LEA	1997	11	33
Alexander		1998	13	108
Cambridge	Alexander Faludy court case against LEA to fund place at	1998	17	78
Faludy	Cambridge university	1998	7	50
Lords	House of Lords rule schools can be sued	2000	23	43
Helen	Helen Adams launches dyslexia campaign	2001	24	199
Kelly/Kelly's	Ruth Kelly branded a hypocrite after sending her son to private	2007	60	406
Ruth	school	2007	42	141

State		2007	67	250
Hamlets		2007	10	35
Tower		2007	12	46
Stringer	MP claims dyslexia is an excuse for poor teaching	2009	11	41

Five further diachronic keywords appeared in both the SMC and the NSMC (Welsh, authority, spelling, recession, handicapped) but upon further investigation these were not true shared keywords as they appeared in different contexts/news items. For example, the word Welsh in the SMC referred to a Welsh language policy whereas in the NSMC it referred to a Welsh Conservative party member.

During the diachronic keyword analysis, the keywords were sorted into categories (see section 5.5.1). **Table 14** (below) summarises this information and shows that the three most popular categories in the SMC over time were education, medical and health and SEN and disability. This is different again from the NSMC where the three most popular categories over time were politics, crime and law and medical and health. The findings for the SMC are to be expected due to the nature of the news in the SMC. However, the low numbers of keywords relating to the theme of literacy across both corpora is concerning as this means that dyslexia (a difficulty with literacy skills) is being constructed predominately without a discussion about literacy. This is especially the case in the NSMC where there are only three keywords in this category. This theme will be explored further in section 8.4.

Table 14: Summary of the categories in the NSMC and SMC

	Number of diachronic keywords		Examples	
Category	SMC	NSMC	SMC	NSMC
Arts	1	0	Festival	
Charity	1	0	Foundation	
Crime and Law	5	45	Criminal, damages, courts	Verdict, fingerprints, murder
Education	101	31	Pupils, Heads, schools	Education, curriculum, headmaster
Film and TV	10	16	Documentary, x-factor, MasterChef	Brookside, GMTV, lottery
Finance	8	8	Recession, income, fee	Pounds, grant, recession
ICT	12	2	Technology, software, voice-recognition	Software, CD

Literacy	23	3	Reading, sounds, spelling	Spelling, punctuation
Media and Social Media	6	10	Twitter, news, blog	Newspaper, twitter, Facebook
Medical and Health	38	44	Drugs, treatment, cure	Glue Ear, Gene, Cure
Politics	0	52		Tory, cabinet, election
SEN and Disability	29	13	Handicapped, Disabled, statemented	Handicap, statements, needs
Sport	0	28		Athletics, players, basketball

A collocation analysis of the words dyslexia and dyslexic revealed in the NSMC revealed a total of 1300 collocates of the words ‘dyslexia’ and ‘dyslexic’ whereas in the SMC a total of 513 was found. This is summarised in **Table 15** (below).Taking the normalised frequencies **Table 15** shows that the words ‘dyslexia’ and ‘dyslexic’ occur more frequently within the SMC (e.g., for every 100,000 words dyslexia occurs 40 times in the SMC compared to 12 in the NSMC).

Table 15: Total number of collocations for 'dyslexia' and 'dyslexic' in the SMC and NSMC

Word	Frequency in SMC	Normalised Frequency	Frequency in NSMC	Normalised Frequency
Dyslexia	353	39.45	822	11.92
Dyslexic	160	17.88	478	6.93
Totals	513	57.33	1300	18.84

This chapter has compared the data in the NSMC to the data in the SMC and concluded that the way in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject has been constructed within these corpora is different. This conclusion has been drawn based on the findings that there were no shared keywords across the corpora, the keyword categories were different from one another, the keywords in the NSMC had no association with educational or literacy discourse, and instead focused on celebrity news items. These themes are explored in more detail using both corpus linguistics and a Foucauldian theoretical lens in the following chapter.

8 Key themes and discussion

This chapter will discuss the themes that have emerged from the data collected for this study. These themes include: the school and the education system as a site of failure, the lack of literacy and educational discourse in the NSMC, male dominance, dyslexia as a childhood condition, the use of experts and celebrities to construct dyslexia/dyslexic subject, cures and treatments of dyslexia and the use of empowering and deficit discourse. The themes in this research have been informed by the analysis of the corpora and discussed from a Foucauldian perspective drawing on the method outlined by Foucault (1977a, 1977b, 1981, 1985, 1986) which is known as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (see chapter 5, section 5.2 for more detail).

8.1 Empowering and deficit discourse in the SMC and NSMC

This section will investigate the empowering and deficit discourses found within the NSMC and SMC. It will discuss the differences between the two corpora in the ways in which they use empowering and deficit discourse to construct the topic of dyslexia as well as the dyslexic subject. Both the corpora use discourses from SEN/Disability and medical/health to construct dyslexia. Table 14 (above) shows that the category of medical/health is more frequent in the NSMC compared with the SMC, but in the NSMC medical/health is more frequent earlier in the corpus and there is a large gap between 2006 and 2017 (see **Table 17**). Medical/health is more evenly distributed across the years in the SMC (see **Table 16** below). Undeniably, medicine and psychology are the root disciplines of the field of learning disabilities (D. K. Reid & Weatherly-Valle, 2004) so there is little surprise that medical language is being used to construct the topic of dyslexia across the corpora.

Table 16: Dyslexia keywords over time (SMC)

	Year																																	
Category	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Arts																✓																			
Charity																✓																			
Crime and Law												✓					✓	✓																	
Education	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Film and TV													✓									✓					✓				✓				
Finance																✓				✓						✓	✓				✓			
ICT		✓		✓								✓		✓		✓		✓																✓
Literacy			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓						✓									✓			
Media and Social Media																											✓		✓				✓	

| | | |

Table 17: Dyslexia keywords over time (NSMC)

	Year																															
Category	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Crime and Law		✓	✓	✓				✓				✓		✓			✓		✓							✓								✓
Education		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓									✓		✓					✓			
Film and TV		✓				✓	✓		✓			✓	✓				✓				✓				✓				✓		✓			✓
Finance		✓		✓		✓								✓	✓											✓	✓							
ICT					✓								✓																					
Literacy								✓	✓																									
Media and Social Media								✓															✓							✓	✓	✓		✓
Medical and Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓				✓											✓
Politics			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓			✓							✓		✓								
SEN and		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓									✓										

Disability													
Sport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

The category of SEN/Disability is like that of medical/health in the way in which it uses more deficit discourse to construct the dyslexic subject. For example, **Table 18** and **Table 19** (below) show that the words *handicapped, disability, statemented* and *needs* are all frequent across the corpora in this category. They also show that there are more diachronic keywords in the SMC compared with the NSMC in this category.

Table 18: Top 20 keywords in SMC relating to the theme of SEN and Disability

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	SEN	68	7.60
2	ADHD	46	5.14
3	Disabled	45	5.03
4	Disability	40	4.47
5	Label/Labels	34	3.80
6	Disabled	28	3.13
7	Carers	27	3.02
8	Tribunal	26	2.91
9	Speech	22	2.46
10	DSA	18	2.01
11	Assessment	17	1.90
12	Handicapped	16	1.79
13	ADD	16	1.79
14	Overlays	16	1.79
15	Statemented	15	1.68
16	SLI	15	1.68
17	Statementing	14	1.56
18	Disclose	11	1.23
19	Blind	6	0.67
20	Handicap	6	0.67

Table 19: Top keywords in SMC relating to the theme of SEN and Disability

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	Need/Needs	275	3.99
2	Special	86	1.25
3	Blind/Blindness	84	1.22
4	Educational	62	0.90
5	ADD	52	0.75
6	Hyperactivity/Hyperactive	41	0.59
7	Substantial	33	0.48
8	Savant/Savants	32	0.46
9	Handicapped	22	0.32
10	Statement/Statements	14	0.20
11	Handicap	12	0.17
12	Provision	10	0.14
13	Dyslexics	5	0.07

Proponents of the social model of disability argue that any disadvantage experienced by someone with a disability is not caused by their individual impairment but rather is caused by society which has failed to accommodate that person's difference (Cline & Frederickson, 2015). This model is contrasted with the medical model which focuses on the impairments and disabilities of the individual person and argues that it is the disabilities that limit and disadvantage the person with disability. The medical model has emphasis on possible cures and rehabilitation (Oliver, 1996). However, in reality, there is not a clear divide between the social and medical models of disability with their 'differences amounting to a disciplinary divide' between disability studies and medical sociology (Carol Thomas, 2004, p. 569). Carol Thomas (2004, p. 580) goes onto argue that the fields of disability studies and medical sociology share common ground; they both agree that that the social model of disability is flawed as it neglects the causal linkage that impairment plays in disability and thus questions the usefulness of the terms 'social model' and 'medical model' as well as the arbitrary separation between the two. Indeed, Shakespeare and Watson (2001, pp. 13-14)

propose that the term ‘social model’ is abandoned because ‘the ‘strong’ social model has become a problem…and outlived its usefulness’. They argue that the social model separates impairment from disability, and this does not reflect the reality faced by people with disabilities (this idea will be discussed further in section 8.4).

These arguments have led Thomas (1999) to formulate her own definition of disability which will be utilised within this study. She defines disability as:

> Disability is a form of social oppression involving the social imposition of restrictions of activity on people with impairments and the socially engendered undermining of their source psycho-emotional wellbeing (Carol Thomas, 1999, p. 60)

I argue that this definition bridges the divide between the social and medical models and accurately reflects the reality that disability is not binary and is more nuanced. Therefore, this thesis will use the terms deficit model as opposed to medical model and non-deficit model as opposed to social model in order to reflect the arguments in disability literature which question the usefulness of these terms.

Using the deficit model argument that society disables the individual, the dyslexic subject faces problems due to the move towards mass literacy and the negativity in society towards being illiterate (Campbell, 2013). The deficit model of disability is also reflected in the section below where the emphasis is on cures and treatments. Overall, as this section will discuss, the SMC uses more disabling or deficit language than the NSMC.

This is demonstrated by the number of diachronic keywords in the SMC (29 unique keywords) compared with the NSMC (13 unique keywords) in the category of SEN/disability. Therefore, I would argue that the SMC predominately uses the deficit model of disability; this is supported by the

high number of words also in the medical/health category. Medical language and SEN/disability language has authoritative overtones. Fairclough (2013, p. 138) discusses the idea of ‘discourse technologists’ and the emergence of the expert who has a strong relationship with knowledge in that they have access to scientific information and that they hold accredited roles within society. He goes onto argue that this leads to ‘their interventions into discursive practice’ carrying an aura of truth. In this way medical discourse is legitimised through the discourse of professionalism (Fulcher, 2015). The use of experts in the UK media is discussed in more detail in section 8.5 (below).

The SMC is therefore primarily driven by a deficit model which ‘assumes that a comprehensive diagnosis of physical, neurological or biological disorders should precede intervention in educational settings’ (Massoumeh & Leila, 2012). The deficit model focuses on the impairment (dyslexia) and sees the problem as being with the child. This fits in with the neo-liberalist view of education where success and failure are seen as an individual problem. Thus, the deficit model of disability is embedded with negative perceptions (Brittain, 2004) which means that children with dyslexia are also viewed negatively and in terms of their deficits and not always by their skills. For example, a child with dyslexia may have a strong knowledge in a subject like history but does not have the literacy skills to write down that knowledge in an exam setting making his knowledge less valued than another child who has the literacy skills. How teachers and other educators perceive and interact with students with dyslexia is ‘critical to a successful educational experience’ (Haegele & Hodge, 2016, p. 199) and can also shape the way the student constructs their own dyslexia and how they therefore perceive themselves and their own abilities. The non-deficit model of disability is seen as more progressive and inclusive (Grenier, 2011) when compared with the deficit model.

A further example of how dyslexia has been constructed differently in the SMC and NSMC is how the SMC construct dyslexia as more of a problem and in a more negative way. For example, the keywords in appendix 10 show that keywords include *needs, support, difficulties,* and the theme of SEN and disability are apparent. The SMC construct dyslexia as disabling whereas the NSMC construct dyslexia as empowering. An example from the SMC which demonstrates how dyslexia has been constructed through the use of deficit discourse is from TES and the article is about teachers with disabilities and whether or not they should disclose their disability to their employer. Although the article does offer both sides of the argument, there is evidence of deficit discourse. One such example is from John Stodter (the then general secretary of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland), who questions the 'capability' of such teachers, and the article goes onto say 'he believes people with dyslexia who teach English or primary literacy would find it "challenging" to do the job without additional support. In the current straitened financial situation, some schools might not be able to afford that support' (Hepburn, 2012). This theme of extra support/resources/funding is reflected in the keywords for the SMC (see appendix 10). Dyslexia is being constructed as disabling for the dyslexic student (or teacher) and as a financial strain for the schools as there is emphasis on specialist training, resources, and funding for students with dyslexia in the SMC. Two further examples come from the education sections of The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian:

> 'the review, endorsed by the Government, called for £10 million to improve treatment of dyslexia, including funding for specialist teachers. All children under five will be monitored for signs of the condition' (Paton, 2009).

> 'the British Dyslexia Association describe dyslexic children as those whose 'reading, writing and language skills are impaired so that their capacity to learn falls far short of their natural ability' (Wells, 1986).

In both of these examples, deficit discourse is used (treatment, impaired) indicating that dyslexia is being viewed using the defict model of disability

and thus through the lens of impairment. The deficit model of disability focuses on the impairments and disabilities of the individual person and argues that it is the disabilities that limit and disadvantage the person with disability. It emphasises difference as a problem and portrays the dominant construct of normality (Cameron & Billington, 2015). Again, this fits in with the keywords found in the SMC (table 3) where you have words associated with remedying dyslexia such as *provision*, *resources* and *strategies*. In the first example, the issue of funding and the financial cost of dyslexia to society and schools is once more highlighted. The cost of £10 million is stated, constructing dyslexia as a financial burden to the education system, perhaps at the cost of other children who have SEN or other poor readers who do not have the dyslexia label. Indeed, Elliott has argued across many academic papers and books (c.f. Elliott and Grigorenko (2014), Elliott (2020); Elliott and Nicolson (2016); Gibbs and Elliott (2020)) that children who have the label of dyslexia are unfairly given more funding and support that those children who are deemed to be poor readers; he argues that this can be 'potentially deleterious to broader inclusive practice' (Elliott, 2020, p. 561).

In the second example above, the word *impaired* carries a lot of negative connotations and the OED (2020) define it as 'to make worse, less valuable, or weaker'. Again, demonstrating negative, deficitdiscourse. This also positions the dyslexic subject as 'other' and reinforces normalising technologies. Foucault (1977b) in *Discipline and Punish* observes how the norm entered into education and other institutions which were able to establish what is considered as normal through the use of standardised education which made it possible to 'measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the difference useful by fitting them one to another' (Foucault, 1977b, p. 184). However, G. Rose (2001) argues that it is important to consider who is constructing the discourse, taking this into consideration, this quote is an example of charity discourse. It is therefore in the interests of the charities to emphasise difficulty to secure funding and promote their cause. Meaning that deficit discourse is to be expected in charity discourse. The theme of literacy and problems with reading, spelling and writing also indicate a deficit discourse in the SMC where the words

difficulties and *problems* are high collocates of *reading*. The theme of literacy discourse is discussed below in section 8.4.

Foucault (1972a) argued that discourse constructs a topic and governs the way it can be talked about within society. He also argued that discourse can influence ideas and how they are talked about as well as how ideas are used to regulate the conduct of others (Hall, 1997). Deficit discourse therefore can be used to 'other' people with disabilities as it becomes a discursive dividing practice between the normal and the deviant (Foucault, 1982a). Indeed, the deficit discourse found within this study is similar to that of Graham and Slee (2008) who found deficit discourses in their study investigating the discourses of inclusion. They found evidence of deficit discourses in words like 'disabled', 'disruptive', 'disordered', 'at risk' and 'disadvantaged'. Constructing dyslexia using deficit discourse, positions dyslexia as a problem that needs to be resolved. Indeed, the term within education and educational policy of 'children with SEN' is itself highlights difference. It is said to be an example of a discursive artifact that represents some children as being deficient or 'other' (Liasidou, 2008, p. 486). The emphasis on needs, support and difficulties in the SMC may reflect the neoliberal shift in the mode of government (Foucault, 2004a). In other words, the introduction of market discourse in education; the emphasis on competition and performance of schools and thus children (Ball, 2000, 2013a). In this education system, there is an emphasis on exam performance and league tables, those students who cannot perform and achieve the top grades are therefore less valued. Indeed it can be argued that the publication of exam results undermines equality and creates winners and losers which increases exclusion (Barton, 1993, 1997). I would argue that deficit discourse contributes to this problem as categorising people means that more value is assigned to some groups than others and this introduces unbalanced power dynamics (Hall, 1997).

Table 16 and **Table 17** (above) show different patterns across the categories and themes found within the data, highlighting once more the fact that the

SMC and NSMC construct dyslexia in different ways. In the SMC (table 19), education and medical/health are consistent themes across the years within the corpus. Literacy has a more sporadic pattern, being more frequent earlier on in the corpus and having large gaps in the 2000s where words associated with literacy are absent. SEN/disability again is a consistent category in the SMC. In the NSMC (table 18) education and medical/health are more dominant early in the corpus. SEN/disability, politics and film/TV (an uncommon category in the SMC) appear frequently across the years within the corpus whereas crime/law fluctuates. These differences show that dyslexia in the SMC is constructed from an education and medical/health viewpoint. Therefore, overall, dyslexia in the SMC is constructed negatively, using deficit discourse; by employing a medical or a SEN/disability viewpoint of dyslexia it becomes a diagnostic device which involves normalisation and the 'othering' of the dyslexic child (Foucault, 1982a). Indeed, Foucault (1982a, p. 329), in his essay on subject and power uses 'medicine over the population' as one of the examples of a mechanism of power within society which present a 'series of oppositions'. Foucault (1982a, p. 330) argues that the medical profession exercises an 'uncontrolled power over people's bodies, their health and their life and death'. The use of deficit discourse within the SMC constrains the dyslexic identity and presents a struggle against 'the government of individualisation' (Foucault, 1982a, p. 330).

Dyslexia is constructed differently in the NSMC, deficit discourse using medical/health language is only present early in the corpus. However, the category of SEN/disability does appear consistently throughout the corpus albeit in a much lower frequency compared to the SMC (*f*19 NSMC, *f*29 SMC). Thus, the use of deficit discourse is still present it is just not as prominent or frequent in the NSMC. Indeed, I would argue that the NSMC constructs dyslexia in a much more positive way and this can be illustrated in the fact that dyslexia has been constructed mainly with the use of celebrity success stories; the category of film/TV is consistent throughout the corpus. Additionally, in the category of politics, stories on Michael Heseltine, a dyslexic politician, are dominant focusing on his successes. One article

mentions that he is ‘famously dyslexic’ and possesses ‘an extraordinary managerial ability’, he is also described as having ambition and good leadership qualities (Aitken, 1990). This is an example of the types of empowering discourse present in the NSMC. There is no mention of the difficulties of being dyslexic in the majority of these celebrity success stories but primarily the focus is on the perceived giftedness of dyslexia which is often portrayed in books (Davis & Braun, 2011; Eide & Eide, 2012), films (Dyslexic advantage, 2015) and centres for research (e.g. the Yale centre for creativity and Dyslexia). Davis and Braun (2011, p. 3) when discussing celebrity dyslexics argue that ‘their genius didn’t occur in *spite* of their dyslexia but *because* of it!’ (original emphasis). This link between giftedness and dyslexia is continually being reinforced through these articles and thus could be considered what Foucault (1970, p. 56) termed ‘major narratives’ which are ‘recounted, repeated, and varied’ and are ‘recited in well-defined circumstances’. The dyslexic subject has been constructed as a creative genius through the use of discursive formation (Foucault, 1972a) and the major narratives reinforce this idea. Furthermore, this empowering discourse is a juxtaposition against the deficit discourse found in the SMC; it is an example of discourses which are ‘discontinuous practices, which cross each other, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other (Foucault, 1970, p. 67). It could also be applied to the Foucauldian concept of discontinuity where Foucault argues that ‘we must make allowance for the complex and unstable powers whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy’ (Foucault, 1978, p. 101). Therefore, I would argue the empowering discourse has been adopted by people with dyslexia as part of their identity and in doing so they have created a resistance to the dyslexic identity as a negative construct. Indeed, ‘technologies of the self are transgressive and involve, not direct confrontation or antagonism, but a much more agonistic kind of struggle against those who attempt to label them as disabled’ (Allan, 1999, p. 44). I would argue that the dyslexic subjects who promote the idea that dyslexia is a gift are using transgression to ‘transform themselves in order to attain a state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection

or immortality' (Foucault, 1988, p. 18). Thus, if this is the case, then the dyslexic has become a subject through the use of discourse drawing on Foucault's later work on subjectivity (Foucault, 1978, 1985, 1986). This is opposed to how the dyslexic subject has been created and subjected to discourse (Foucault, 1982a). This is an area where further research would be needed to investigate how the dyslexic subject constructs their own identity.

A strong collocate for 'dyslexia' in the SMC was the word *difficulties*. This supports the discussion presented earlier in this section that the SMC tend to use deficit discourse when constructing dyslexia. However, interestingly in the NSMC, words such as 'suffers', 'disorder', 'difficulties' and 'problems' are all strong collocates of 'dyslexia' (see appendix 12). This is different from earlier results which showed that the NSMC tends to use empowering discourse when constructing dyslexia. However, a more detailed investigation of these collocates show that these words are used in success stories to further highlight the success of the dyslexic subject. Gabriel (2020, p. 318) discusses the use of the structure journalists use in dyslexia success stories. She compares the structure and conventions of weight loss program infomercials that show stark before/after contrasts alongside the 'elusive life change' of the weight loss program with the narratives of dyslexia which discuss a painful academic struggle in state school, then engagement with a private provider and success. Evidence for this type of journalistic discourse appears within the NSMC. For example, in the Alexander Faludy case (discussed further below), Alexander is described as struggling within state school due to his severe dyslexia, he is then taken out and placed into a private school where he flourishes and becomes the youngest ever child to be accepted into university. Indeed, the strong collocates 'suffered', 'overcome' and 'despite' show that dyslexia has been constructed in the NSMC in this way; the subjects severe dyslexia is contrasted with their success story which sometimes includes a comparison between state and private schools (see discussion below). This example of journalistic discourse satisfies two of the news values set out by Harcup and O'Neill (2001): entertainment as it is a human interest story showing how a person

has ‘overcome’ their dyslexia and also surprise because of the contrast of the before and after story and the ability of the dyslexic subject to overcome their severe issues to become a success. Therefore, I would argue that the element of surprise and the use of human-interest stories are being contrived by journalists to attract readers, which is their primary aim – to sell newspapers.

Figure 17 further supports this view that the NSMC often present dyslexia using a success narrative. It shows that the word ‘was’ is a stronger collocate with the word ‘severely’ compared to ‘is’ when investigating the node ‘dyslexic’. In other words, dyslexia has been constructed as a childhood condition with the use of success narratives. This is finding is further highlighted by the fact that the words ‘was’ and ‘had’ are strong collocates of the nodes dyslexia and dyslexic in both the SMC and NSMC (see appendices 10 and 11).

This discussion raises an important question of who benefits and who loses from these empowering and deficit discourses. Arguably, people with dyslexia benefit from empowering discourses as it limits (but not eradicates) the negativity associated with literacy difficulties. It can also provide inspiration and encouragement for dyslexic children who are able to hear about the success of other dyslexic people. However, I would also argue that empowering discourses can also hinder children with dyslexia as it can add an extra pressure of ‘they did it so why can’t you’. Deficit discourses focus on the impairments of the dyslexic person and can help teaching professionals as it gives a more realistic viewpoint of the difficulties experienced by

dyslexic children. This means that the teaching professionals can use this information to develop ways to help and understand dyslexic children. However, dyslexic children will also lose from a completely deficit approach as it does not recognise their strengths. Therefore, a more balanced approach is needed where empowering and deficit discourses are taken into account.

This section has highlighted further differences between the NSMC and SMC in the ways in which they construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. It has discussed how the SMC predominately employ a deficit discourse using language associated with medical and SEN discourses. On the other hand, the NSMC uses more empowering discourse and employs the use of celebrities to promote the more positive sides of dyslexia such as creativity and entrepreneurship. This can be seen as an example of how discourses can compete with one another to create knowledge and truth around a concept. However, it is important to note that even though the dominant discourses found in the SMC were deficit and the dominant discourses in the NSMC empowering, in reality both media types will have examples of both empowering and deficit discourses in their construction of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject.

8.2 The school and education system as a site of failure

One of the main themes found within the data was that school and education was constructed as a site of failure for children with dyslexia. Indeed, the failure of schools to meet the needs of children with dyslexia or identify dyslexia at an early age were prominent within the data. I would therefore argue that the NSMC has used the power of discourse to construct and influence knowledge and ways of thinking about schools and the education system. They have framed schools, teachers, and the education system in a negative way especially in their role in identifying and helping those children

with dyslexia. A discourse of failure has emerged. Foucault argues that discourse shapes reality and also that repetitive discourses can shape knowledge and truth (Foucault, 1972a). I would argue that the UK media is in a powerful position to operate as a disciplinary power and can thus shape identities, knowledge and have claims to truth (Foucault, 1977b). This section will analyse the data produced from the SMC and NSMC that shows how education and schools are portrayed and constructed as sites of failure for children with dyslexia. It will draw on examples from the news reports and analyse these with a Foucauldian lens. The main theme of the school as a site of failure is discussed with reference to several sub-themes that have been found within the data. These sub-themes were the school failure and the celebrity dyslexic, private education versus public education and LEA accountability. Each of these sub-themes will be discussed separately in the following sections, however, taken all together they form a representation of how the UK media are constructing the education system as failing children with dyslexia. The implications this has for education will follow.

School failure and the celebrity dyslexic

This section will begin by exploring the celebrities and their school experiences. During the keyword analysis (data shown in appendix 10) it was noticed that there were no keywords in the NSMC associated with education or literacy and that the keywords in the NSMC were mainly associated with the category of celebrity/showbiz. This led to an investigation on how celebrities with dyslexia were being constructed (see section 0) in the NSMC. I would argue that the media are constructing the dyslexic subject by using famous dyslexics as examples of success and achievement, for example, The Express (2015) state ‘Branson, who has dyslexia and described himself as a dunce at school, is worth 4 billion’. In this example, they use juxtaposition to position his dyslexia and failure at school against his success. Another example comes from The Mail on Sunday who state: ‘he has told how, as a boy, people dismissed him as thick because of his severe dyslexia. Which only makes it even more remarkable that Jamie Oliver has

just been named as Britain's second biggest-selling author since records began - with total book sales of 126 million' (Hastings, 2012). In both examples, dyslexia has been linked with low intelligence by society and the celebrity has become a protagonist who has overcome their dyslexia to become rich and successful. The juxtaposition of dyslexia with success adds emphasis on their success and makes it more of an achievement. Additionally, the lists of dyslexic celebrities in corpora suggest associations with creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation and construct dyslexia as something to be embraced by society rather than as a disability. It is being constructed as a 'gift'. It is also an example of the 'supercrip model' of disability, Clare (2001, p. 360) argues that the supercrip model 'frames disability as a challenge to be overcome and disabled people as superheroes just for living out daily lives'. This theme of empowering discourse was discussed further in section 0.

In the examples above (Branson and Oliver) the school is framed negatively. In the Branson example, he describes himself as a 'dunce at school', in the Oliver example he was dismissed as being thick as a boy. In both examples, there is an implication that the school have failed to identify their dyslexia and as a result branded them as 'thick'. The education system is constructed as failing these two dyslexic celebrities who have gone on to accomplish massive achievements despite this failure. This supports findings by Gabriel (2020, p. 328), who found that state schools in Connecticut were positioned as 'ignorant, unenlightened, non-believers' whereas private providers were positioned as 'enlightened saviours'. The theme of school being positioned negatively in the NSMC was explored further by conducting a concordance analysis of the word *school.* School was found 13814 times in the NSMC in 4150 texts. The top cluster for school was 'left school at' with 279 instances. On further inspection of the concordance data for this cluster, all the news items tell a similar story of children leaving school early (most at the age of 15/16) with few qualifications because of dyslexia and the school is positioned as the site of failure. Some examples include:

> James Martin (celebrity chef): ‘an undiagnosed dyslexic, he left school at 16 with just one O-level - in art. 'Aged 11 I'd come home every Wednesday night in tears because I knew it was English the next day and I'd have to write out thousands of words because I'd spelt them all wrong the previous week’ (Barber, 2016).

> The apprentice TV show contestant: Michael Copp: ‘he has dyslexia and left school at 15 failing to finish his education’ (L. Thomas, 2012).

> Ivan Massow (entrepreneur) ‘as a businessman, too, Massow has had both success and failure. Severely dyslexic**,** he left school at 16 with an O-level in metalwork and scraped through a BTEC in art and design’ (Roux, 2003).

The examples above all share the pattern of these children being failed by their schools, the results being that the children have left school with little to no qualifications. The schools have been framed as failing to help these children succeed and have been portrayed as being solely responsible. In the first example the child was made to write out the words he incorrectly spelt which resulted in tears. Examples like this are used to invoke emotion and anger directed towards the teacher who set this task for the child. It implies that the teacher has a lack of understanding of dyslexia and the ways in which to support a child with dyslexia. This type of celebrity discourse surrounding dyslexia was prominent within the NSMC, this could be due to the fact that they satisfy a number of the news values set out by (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001). Namely, celebrity, entertainment, the power elite (as I would argue that celebrities are in a powerful position within Western society), surprise, bad news and good news. The fact that these news stories satisfy several of the news values makes them more likely to be reported and considered newsworthy by the journalists and editors of the newspapers.

Private education versus state education

One of the main ways in which the UK media constructed schools as a site of failure was to compare private education with state education. Within these comparisons, state education was framed as a site of failure whereas private education was framed as a solution or as succeeding where state education has failed. To investigate this sub-theme, an analysis of the word *private* was carried out using collocation. It was found that the word *private* was highly collocated with *school* in the NSMC. A concordance analysis found that the same types of construction as Gabriel (2020) discussed above. The private school, in the NSMC, has been constructed a saviour and contrasted with the failure of state schools. An example from the NSMC states:

> Carol Voderman (TV presenter) taking about her son who has dyslexia: 'by that age [6] it was hard for him to be educated anywhere as his needs were so severe… They eventually found a private special education needs school where Cameron attended for four years' (Shenton, 2015).

In this example, the article then goes onto discuss the fact that her son is now attending university adding to the idea that the private school was a saviour and managed to succeed in educating her son where the state school failed.

During the diachronic keyword analysis, it was noted that three of the keywords (state, GCSE, behaviour) are in the NSMC and SMC diachronic keyword lists. Taking their normalised frequencies these three words are more frequent in the SMC compared to the NSMC. The word state refers to public sector schools as opposed to private sector schools. In both corpora 'state' referred to one discursive event which attracted a lot of media attention; Ruth Kelly, a former education secretary, removed her dyslexic son from a state school into placed him into a private school. Most of the articles cite Kelly as saying that she was following professional advice by placing her son in a school that can 'meet his particular needs' (Webster & Frean, 2007). The implication here is that state school cannot meet the needs of this child. Again, there is a contrast between the state and private school whereby the

private school is the saviour, and the state school has failed the child by not being able to meet his needs. This idea is reinforced by quotes from what Foucault terms ‘powerful actors’ (Foucault, 1972a); people who are deemed as having importance (and thus power) within society and can shape discourse. For example:

> As a school governor, I know that the splendid special needs teachers we have are too stretched to provide the necessary support in the state system for the 18 per cent of children who need them.
>
> If you are a parent of the one in five children who has special needs and you cannot afford to 'go private', the Government has let you down and Ms Kelly should have the integrity to admit this. (Harris, 2007).

In this example, the author positions himself as a school governor, thus somebody with knowledge about the education system. This gives his discourse power and validity. He takes on the role of the ‘powerful actor’ (Foucault, 1972a) which Foucault argues gives him the power to determine the truth or knowledge about a particular social group, in this case the dyslexic children in UK schools. Foucault (1972a) argues that in order to be classed as truth, it has to come from an authoritative voice, a school governor could be classed as having this authoritative voice.

Kelly received a lot of negative publicity for her choice to send her son to a private school as it was deemed as being hypocritical (J. Chapman, 2007). But Kelly also received a lot of support and understanding for her decision even in TES:

> She hated school. Her mother was on the line. There was no state special school suitable for Isabel, and her mother had never considered private education… It took years of battle before Isabel received funding for a Camphill school.
>
> It was heart-warming to watch Isabel change to become a gifted painter and musician. Her literacy skills and articulacy grew rapidly and she developed several strong, mutually supportive friendships (Neustatter, 2007).

> Dyslexia has certainly hit the headlines, courtesy of Ruth Kelly. There are many issues raised by her opting not to send her child to a state school and instead seeking specialist help in the private sector. Personally, I am glad that Ms Kelly has put her child's welfare before her own career. By this act she has drawn much-needed attention to the plight of dyslexic children in mainstream education' (Yewlett, 2007).

In both quotations, the state school is viewed negatively, as being unable to meet the needs of children with SEN and thus the state school is constructed as a site of failure once more. The private school is constructed as the answer or as Gabriel (2020) argues as the 'enlightened saviours' who can meet the needs of children with SEN.

An article in the Daily Mail goes onto say that the private school selected by Kelly specialises in 'preparing dyslexic and dyspraxic children for entrance exams to independent secondary schools. It also specialises in teaching gifted pupils. In some cases, pupils may fall into both categories' (J. Chapman, 2007). This again points to the idea that dyslexic people are gifted. Indeed, the words IQ and MENSA are listed in the diachronic keyword list in the NSMC, constructing the dyslexic subject as 'genius'. These two words refer to the Alexander Fauldy case discussed above.

Even though the word GCSE is key in both corpora (see appendix 10), the news reports which use the word GCSE are different in the SMC and the NSMC. In the SMC all the reports are about the change in the way GCSEs were marked which resulted in pupils being penalised for bad spelling in their GCSEs and the impact this has on children with dyslexia. This is one of the few discursive events around literacy in the corpora. Indeed, the NSMC only has two unique keywords in the category of literacy (spelling and punctuation). In the NSMC however, the discussion is mainly around the decision by Gove in 2014 to make GCSEs more difficult which again would impact dyslexic students. Another article in the NSMC where the word GCSE

appears is in the Independent on Sunday has the following headline: ‘If they had stayed in a mainstream school they would have no GCSEs’ (Garner, 2014). The article is about a specialist college which teaches dyslexic students. The headteacher had the following to say:

> Some of the school's pupils come to it because they are floundering in a mainstream secondary school - unable to access the curriculum and bullied as a result of it. "They can easily switch off school altogether (Garner, 2014).

Again, this is a further example of the private school being a saviour and being contrasted against the failing state school. The addition of the disclosure that the dyslexic child is bullied in mainstream school further shows the state school in a negative way and unable to deal with the challenges faced by the dyslexic child. Indeed, the word bullying is key in the SMC where this issue of bullying and the school failing to help is also highlighted. For example, in an article in TES, a parent discusses her son John being bullied:

> To this day, I cannot understand why the school did nothing to help John. It got so bad he started telling me how he wished he were dead. It all began when John was placed in a special class because he was dyslexic. He would get his book scribbled on and they started stealing his things. It escalated into physical abuse (The Times Education Supplement, 2000).

In this case, the dyslexic child has been bullied to the point of wishing he were dead; this is very emotive language, and I would argue that the addition of the quote that the ‘school did nothing to help’ is used to invoke anger, injustice and sympathy in the reader. The school is portrayed as a site of failure once more at the detriment of the mental health of this particular student.

This section has highlighted a concerning trend in the NSMC whereby state schools are constructed as failing students with dyslexia and private schools are deemed as the solution. This skewed negative construction of state

education has an impact on how parents conceive state education and its ability to support their children with dyslexia. It paints a picture of unfairness whereby only those parents who are in a better financial situation can help their children while the rest of society have no option but to send their children to state schools who (according to NSM) cannot provide adequate support for their children. This fuels discontent. The good work that state schools and their teachers do are lost within the corpus which could also demoralise the teachers who are succeeding at helping students with dyslexia, making teachers and parents lose from this state vs private discourse presented within the NSMC.

Local Education Authority accountability

Another sub-theme found within the data was that the Local Education Authority were deemed as being accountable for the failure of schools to identify and provide suitable education for children with dyslexia. This can be demonstrated using data from the keyword analysis (see **Table 13** above) that found nearly half (three of the eight) of the shared news items in **Table 13** are about the suing of schools and Local Education Authorities. The Pamela Phelps case was a landmark ruling whereby she was awarded £45,000 in damages because 'education chiefs failed to discover she was dyslexic' until two months before she left school (Garner, 1997). Her education was described as 'inadequate' and an article by The Independent which also states that 'many children have been badly let down and this case will mean they can now go ahead to claim compensation' (Streeter, 1997). The concern that this case would lead to further claims for compensation was a common thread running through the articles in both the NSMC and the SMC. Phelps is mentioned again in both corpora (although not in the diachronic keywords) in 2000 when the house of lords rule that schools can be sued after her right to damages had been withdrawn in the Court of Appeal in 1998. The ruling was a result of three separate cases of a dyslexic student attempting to sue their LEAs. The ruling concluded that teachers have a 'duty of care to all their pupils' (Russell, 2000). Indeed, there are nine

separate cases across the diachronic keywords in both corpora of students suing their LEAs due to undiagnosed dyslexia. This is an example of repetitive discourse whereby the schools, teachers and LEAs are constructed as failing to diagnose dyslexia and thus not meeting their duty of care. The education system is being constructed as a site of failure for dyslexic children. Even in the Alexander Faludy case, where the LEA is not being sued due to lack of diagnoses, the education system and teachers especially are constructed in a negative way. In this case the mum of Faludy was in a legal battle with the LEA to pay university tuition fees for the 15-year-old who had gained a place at Cambridge University. In the NSMC, the state school is described as unable to 'not only to spot the exceptional talent beneath the disability, but also to protect him against bullies' which is contrasted against the private school which 'saw his potential and provided conditions in which it could be realised' (Daily Mail, 1998). In another article about the Faludy case, the failure of the teachers to spot dyslexia is once more highlighted with another child called Alec: 'his teachers thought he was just being naughty', 'obviously his teachers had never come across anyone like Alex before', 'his teachers were supportive but didn't understand his problems' (Veash, 1998). All these phrases are examples of repetitive discourse which place the school, the teachers, and the education system as a site of failure. They frame the teachers as not understanding or not paying attention to dyslexia which supports the findings in other studies (Gabriel, 2020; Hurford et al., 2016; Worthy, Daly-Lesch, Tily, Godfrey, & Salmerón, 2021; Worthy, Salmerón, Long, Lammert, & Godfrey, 2018; Worthy, Svrcek, Daly-Lesch, & Tily, 2018). The state school is represented as part of the problem whereas the private school is framed as being the solution.

The diachronic keyword *LEA/LEAs* appeared in the SMC (see **Table 20** below) in 1993, whereas the keyword *authority* (which refers to the Local Education Authority) appears in the NSMC (see **Table 21** below) in both 1991 and 1995.

Table 20: Top 20 keywords in SMC relating to the theme of education

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	Student/Students	123	13.75
2	Pupils	103	11.50
3	SFA	87	9.72
4	School/School's	85	9.50
5	Examination/Examinations/Exams/Exam	77	8.61
6	Music	72	8.05
7	State	67	7.49
8	GCSE/GCSEs	66	7.38
9	Institutions	56	6.26
10	Parent/Parents	48	5.36
11	Bully/Bullying	44	4.92
12	Results	40	4.47
13	Behaviour	38	4.25
14	Leavers	37	4.14
15	Tutor/Tutors	36	4.02
16	Tables	34	3.80
17	Candidates	33	3.69
18	Degree	31	3.46
19	Quaker	31	3.46
20	LEA/LEAs	31	3.46

Table 21: Top 20 keywords in NSMC relating to the theme of Education

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	State	250	3.62
2	GCSE/GCSEs	111	1.61
3	Grade/Grades	102	1.48
4	Authority	96	1.39
5	Curriculum	70	1.01
6	Mainstream	63	0.91
7	IQ	61	0.88
8	Sector	56	0.81
9	Standards	55	0.80
10	Provision	45	0.65
11	Behaviour	36	0.52
12	Education	31	0.45
13	Resources	31	0.45
14	Independent	26	0.38
15	Theology	22	0.32

16	Polytechnic/Polytechnics	20	0.29
17	Educational	19	0.28
18	Essays	19	0.28
19	MENSA	16	0.23
20	Headmaster	15	0.22

Again, their use refers to different discursive events, but they share the similar theme of the LEAs being constructed as sites of failure for dyslexic children in their care. In the SMC the discursive event being discussed is the inequalities of statemented children and the lack of funding given to those children who have a statement of special educational needs. In terms of dyslexia, the main article discusses the fact that there is inconsistency in the statementing of dyslexic children. The article continues with:

> parents of dyslexic children know that statementing is one way to force schools and LEAs to make special provision for a range of learning difficulties. This category of pupils is likely to increase because the Local Government Ombudsman has just made an award of £5,000 to a dyslexic pupil whose condition was not properly monitored by his LEA (Sweetman, 1993).

In the quote above, the use of the word ‘force’ implies that the LEAs do not want to offer a statutory assessment or statement of special educational needs to the dyslexic child and it is a word with extremely negative connotations which again constructs the education system as not meeting the needs of children with dyslexia and even implies that they do not want to; they are being ‘forced’ by parents. The article blames ‘budgetary pressures’ and talks about rumours which ‘suggest that the informal selection policies operated by some over-subscribed schools have discriminated against SEN applicants’ (Sweetman, 1993). Further adding to the idea that the education system as a whole is failing to meet the needs of dyslexic children. This idea that teachers are unwilling to address dyslexia has been found in other research by Worthy, Salmerón, et al. (2018).

In the example above (Sweetman, 1993), the parents are positioned as having the power, providing they have the knowledge about the statementing process. This is an example of Foucault's idea that power forms knowledge and produces discourse (Foucault, 1980). Indeed, Foucault (1977b, p. 27) links power with knowledge in the composite term power/knowledge. He argues that 'there is no power relation without the correlated constitution of the field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations'. In the example above, for parents, knowledge equals power. Parents have been positioned as having the power-knowledge to fight against the system whereas the dyslexic subject has been positioned as the victim of an education system that does not work for them. This could be seen as an example of a neo-liberalist education system whereby parents and students are seen as consumers with consumer rights (Ball, 2013a). Thus, the dominant discourse in the category of education is one of failure by state schools. The newspaper reports in these corpora, have focused on the negative cases, there is little evidence of the reporting of schools succeeding with children with dyslexia in either the NSMC or the SMC. This gives the impression, through repetitive discourse and intertextuality, that schools fail more than they succeed when it comes to identifying and supporting children with dyslexia. This can have negative implications for education.

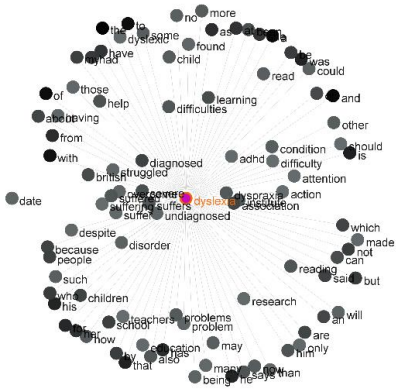
In the NSMC the word 'authority' is referring to one discursive event which was reported in 1991 then again in 1995. The discursive event was Regina v Kent County Council and was a court case whereby Regina (the parent) placed her severely dyslexic child in a fee-paying school and was suing the LEA for not continuing their agreement to pay for part of the school fees when the child turned 16. Regina won her court case, and it was decided that the LEA would be liable to pay the school fees in full. This discursive event again constructs the LEA and state schools as failing the needs of dyslexic children. It uses juxtaposition to polarise the state and private education sectors, for example, one article describes her education in the state sector

as ‘plainly unsatisfactory’ and describes the child as flourishing in the private sector (The Times, 1995).

Diagnosed versus undiagnosed dyslexia

Another way in which the UK media frame schools as the site of failure is by using examples of people who have not had their dyslexia diagnosed at an early age where intervention is key. **Figure 16** (below) shows that the word *undiagnosed* has a strong collocation with *dyslexia*. This is contrasted with the strong collocation of the word ‘diagnosed’ with the node ‘dyslexic’ (a full list of the collocates is provided in appendix 13). This implies that there is a juxtaposition in the NSMC of undiagnosed dyslexia and the diagnosed dyslexic.

Figure 16: Collocation network of the search term dyslexia in the NSMC



The use of the word ‘undiagnosed’ alongside dyslexia, once more draws attention to the fact that the NSMC is constructing the school as a site of failure; they are failing to diagnose dyslexia in children at a young age.

Further investigation the word ‘undiagnosed’ in the NSMC reveals more evidence of the success story narrative and the failure of schools to successfully diagnose dyslexia, contrasting the child’s undiagnosed dyslexia with success. For example:

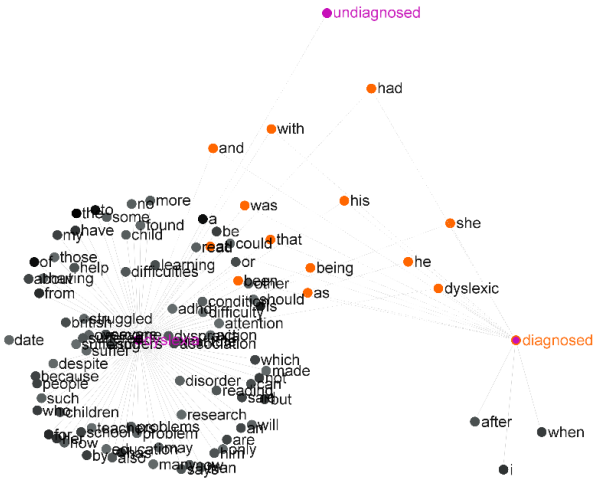
> Law was a creative child but had dyslexia, which went undiagnosed. "I was written off at school," he said. "I ended up in an appalling class that was nicknamed Burden's babies because Mrs Burden looked after us. I was with all the people who really didn't get on with school."
>
> However, he managed to get into Newcastle university, where his dyslexia was at last diagnosed. There he entered a national competition to design a piece of luggage and came up with the idea of a plastic ride-on suitcase for children (Bridge, 2010).

> Stewart, whose dyslexia went undiagnosed until years after he retired as a Formula One driver, believes there is a definite link. He told The Independent: "I was labelled thick at school but sport saved my life. I could have turned to alcohol or drugs to escape the situation, but I found something I was good at (Flemming, 2011).

> Like many bright children with undiagnosed dyslexia, he [Michael Heseltine] was thought of as unacademic, but excelled at maths, like many other dyslexic people. Other subjects in which they flourish include art, crafts, design, engineering and music (Illman, 1995).

In all of these three examples, dyslexia has been left undiagnosed at a young age with the blame for this late/undiagnosed dyslexia being placed firmly within education. Stewart even goes onto say that the result of his dyslexia being left undiagnosed could have led him into a life of drugs or alcohol. Furthermore, **Figure 17** (below) shows that the word diagnose is collocated with ‘after’, again emphasising the juxtaposition of life before and after diagnosis. In the second example, the use of the phrase ‘dyslexia was at last diagnosed’ (Bridge, 2010) emphasises prolonged suffering.

Figure 17: Collocation network of dyslexia in the NSMC



An article in The Guardian newspaper written by Dr Chris Singleton (Singleton, 1996) sums up the evidence presented so far that schools and the education system have been framed negatively and as a site of failure for children with dyslexia:

> Significant numbers of pupils leave school with abysmal literacy skills despite having had promising educational potential, usually because their dyslexic difficulties were never understood nor given adequate help. Small wonder that when the state sector has let them down, desperate parents from all socio-economic groups turn to the private sector, or appeal against refusals of statements, or even have recourse to law (Singleton, 1996).

Dr Chris Singleton, who is the chairman for the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education at University of Hull, discusses the fact that

children are leaving school at a young age with little or no skills/qualifications and he places the blame with state schools and like many other articles within the corpora, highlights that private schools have been the answer to many parents. This is another example of authoritative discourse as the newspaper article positions the writer in a position of power with the use of his title ‘Dr’ as well as job title. It gives his arguments an element of authority and truth as his position in society gives his voice power. He has the power to create discourse and truth (Foucault, 1972a).

This section has highlighted that schools and LEAs have been constructed, both in the SMC and NSMC as failing to meet the needs of dyslexic children within their care. Education has therefore, been constructed primarily negatively and this has not changed overtime, with state schools being contrasted with private schools who act as ‘saviours’ to dyslexic children (Gabriel, 2020). This repetitive discourse can have a negative effect on how state schools and the education system in the UK are perceived by parents of children who have dyslexia. As previously argued, media has a powerful function within society to not only disseminate knowledge but to also create knowledge: they are a socially powerful institution. Foucault (1977b) argues that knowledge is linked with power and not only assumes the authority of truth but also has the power to make itself true. Indeed, ‘truth isn’t outside of power…Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth; that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true’ (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). I would argue that media in the UK have created their own truth or version of the truth with regards to dyslexia and the role of the education system; they have constructed the education system as a site of failure for children with dyslexia with the use of repetitive discourse. Indeed, the idea of intertextuality which is ‘the process whereby one text plays upon other texts, in the endless referentiality of texts and the elements of cultural production’ (Fox, 1997, p. 32) is central to Foucault’s genealogy works he ascribes to the idea of intertextuality when he argues that ‘nothing has any meaning outside of discourse’ (Foucault, 1972a). The UK media, therefore, use intertextuality to not only conceptualise dyslexia in a certain

way but also to create a powerful discourse around educational failure. This is an example of how a discursive formation can create a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980). Hall (1997, p. 49) uses the example of the idea that in society single parenting leads to delinquency and crime. He points out that it may not be true and that this link has never been conclusively proven, but everyone believes it to be so, and the result is the punishment of single parents. The same can be argued about the discursive formation found in this thesis that schools and the education system are failing children with dyslexia and the danger is that this discourse becomes like that of the discourse surrounding single parents and it becomes a regime of truth and teachers are then seen to be not doing their best for children with dyslexia. Schools are being framed as solely responsible for failing to make children with dyslexia succeed. Teachers are being constructed as villains who fail to identify and provide adequate support and also fail to recognise the giftedness of dyslexic children. This raises the question of whether or not state teachers are really failing students with dyslexia. The narrative presented within this section is certainly feeding into this idea. However, this question is unfortunately unanswerable with the data set from this thesis but is an interesting area for further research.

8.3 Male dominance in the NSMC and SMC

A major finding in this project is the male dominance in both the SMC and NSMC in the construction of dyslexia and the construction of the dyslexic subject. This section will discuss these findings but with the acknowledgement that further research needs to be carried out in this area.

The first indication of male dominance appeared when investigating the top-ten-word frequencies in the NSMC (see

Table 9 above) where the presence of the pronoun *he* was found but not the female alternative *she*. An investigation of personal pronouns in the frequency word lists was then conducted (see **Table 22** below). **Table 22** shows in column two where each of the personal pronouns appeared in the wordlist. This data shows that in both corpora the male pronouns appeared more often than the female pronouns. Indeed, taking the normalised frequencies, the male pronouns appear nearly twice as often as the female pronouns. This means that male dyslexics are discussed within the media nearly twice as often as female dyslexics.

Table 22: Personal Pronouns found in wordlists

	SMC				NSMC			
Pronoun	No	Raw frequency	Normalised Frequency	Dispersion	No	Raw frequency	Normalised Frequency	Dispersion
He	22	4,709	526	0.96	8	84,266	1221	0.98
She	32	3,413	381	0.90	20	42,901	622	0.98
His	36	2,898	324	0.97	14	57,680	836	0.98
Her	42	2,589	289	0.93	21	39,305	570	0.99

Additional evidence for the male dominance in the corpora can be found in the diachronic keyword analysis whereby all of the people identified during this stage of analysis were coded as being male or female. 301 people were identified as being key players in the corpora (i.e., their names had appeared as being key during the diachronic keyword analysis), 38% (114) were female compared to 42% (187) male. This not only shows that there are more male people within the corpora but also that more males are seen as key within the corpora. Indeed, upon further investigation 142 male key players held a position of power within society (e.g., teacher, politician, celebrity) compared with only 75 women. Using this evidence, I would argue that women are marginalised in producing the discourse about dyslexia in the UK media. One reason for this finding is that males are given more space in the UK press compared with women. This is supported by research carried out by Scott and Tribble (2006, p. 162) who looked at The Guardian newspaper to investigate gender imbalance in UK news reporting. They found that there was a major imbalance with regards to space given to men as opposed to women, with ratio of 4:1 male: female pronouns. Another reason for this finding is that dyslexia is more common in males than females with a ratio of between 1.6:1 to 2.4:1 depending on the measure used to assess reading impairment (Quinn & Wagner, 2015).

A Foucauldian lens has been used in feminist theory and has tended to centre around his works Discipline and Punish and The History of Sexuality (McNay, 1992). Feminists have used these works to explore women's oppression in terms of Foucault's ideas on power and its relation to the body (Bordo, 2002; McLaren, 2004; Sawicki, 2020; Taylor & Vintges, 2004). Although, outside of the remit of this thesis, I would argue that the male dominance in the corpora as well as in the UK press is another example of female oppression in society. Demonstrating that men still have the power to produce and control discourse especially within the UK media. However, this needs further investigation and highlights another area of research stemming from this thesis.

This section has briefly discussed the finding that there is male dominance within the news items surrounding dyslexia within the corpora. This is a further example of repetitive discourse which has been used to construct a truth about dyslexia (Foucault, 1972a). The fact that female dyslexics are underrepresented within the corpora is concerning because this could potentially lead to the under diagnosis of girls who have dyslexia. If teachers and parents are led to incorrectly believe that dyslexia is a male condition, then they might miss the diagnosis of girls who are struggling to read. Early diagnosis is essential for children with dyslexia so that they can be given access to early intervention in order for them to develop their reading skills successfully (Snowling, 2013). In addition, failure to diagnosis dyslexia at an early stage can contribute to a sense of failure which can have a massive impact on learning and their self-worth (Burden, 2005; Humphrey & Mullins, 2002). Therefore, the invisibility of women with dyslexia within the corpora is concerning and further research about the impact and extent of this needs to be carried out.

8.4 Lack of literacy and educational discourse in the NSMC

Dyslexia is known as a learning disability associated with difficulties in learning to read, write and spell (Snowling, Hulme, & Nation, 2020, p. 501). Therefore, dyslexia is predominately a learning disability which affects literacy skills and within the academic literature on dyslexia, literacy skills (especially reading skills) are discussed hand in hand with dyslexia. Chapter 3 discussed dyslexia using Foucault's genealogies to explore how political and social forces facilitated the formation of the concept of dyslexia through the use of normalisation, bio-power, and bio-politics. Chapter 3 also discussed how the rise of social statistics and the dominant discourse of literacy made dyslexia a politicalised term. This section will discuss the finding that the mainstream news constructs dyslexia and the dyslexic subject with very little reference to literacy and education. Indeed, **Table 17** (above) tracks the theme of literacy in the NSMC between 1984 and 2017 and shows that there are no news items which fall into this theme after 1992.

Table 16 (above) tracks the theme of literacy in the SMC, although more frequent there are still large gaps where literacy is not mentioned. During the keyword analysis it was found that words associated with educational discourse are more frequent in the SMC compared with the NSMC which is to be expected. However, I did not expect there to be no keywords in the top 50 (or the top 100) associated with education (see appendix 10). Therefore, I would argue that dyslexia in the NSMC is not constructed as an educational issue/need, especially when considered alongside the fact that there are also no keywords associated with literacy or reading in the top 50 in the NSMC. Indeed, as shown in appendix 8, the keywords in the NSMC appear to be associated with celebrity discourse (such as film, Hollywood, actor, fans). This fits with a finding in the frequency word analysis which found a high number of news items about the 'celebrity dyslexic' alongside a high number of instances of celebrities talking about their own dyslexia. From a Foucauldian perspective, this is an example of how the media use discursive formation to construct the identity of the dyslexic subject (Foucault, 1972a) through the use of repetitive discourse. This theme of the use of celebrities in constructing dyslexia and the dyslexic subject is explored further in section 0.

The NSMC are not constructing dyslexia as a disability or learning difficulty but rather as a positive condition, much like the charity discourse surrounding dyslexia (see section 0 for further discussion). There is little discussion about the difficulties that people with dyslexia face and no discussion on successful literacy interventions or ways to help poor readers learn to read. The implication for education is that the focus of dyslexia moves away from literacy skills and towards entrepreneurship and creativity. In other words, there is a danger that dyslexia is seen as a positive disorder with little attention drawn to the difficulties facing dyslexic children in the classroom. Furthermore, this also leads to the dyslexia label having value; 'the same problems become morally unacceptable character deficits' (Cameron & Billington, 2015, p. 1234) without the label. The label becomes socially powerful and less stigmatised. Indeed, Gibbs and Elliott (2010, p. 298) argue that the label becomes 'cherished' and those without the label

‘will continue to be vilified as lazy, ignorant or unintelligent and, concomitantly, be perceived as less needy of specialised reading intervention’. I would argue that the lack of literacy and educational discourse within the NSMC and SMC contributes to this issue.

From a Foucauldian perspective, the lack of literacy and educational discourse is an example of the power of the media to construct their own truth about dyslexia. They are constructing dyslexia in a similar way to charities, they are legitimising their own stance by suggesting that dyslexia can benefit society as a whole. Furthermore, Shapiro (1993, p. 17) argues that within charity discourse people become defined as objects of pity or as sources of inspiration and both are oppressive as they do not reflect ‘the day-today reality of most disabled people, who struggle constantly with smaller challenges’. I would argue that dyslexia has been constructed in the same way; as objects of pity in the success stories cited above where the child was failed by the school or education system and then they become sources of inspiration when they have succeeded against all odds. Dyslexia has been constructed as a societal benefit rather than as an individual problem. As previously stated, dyslexia is predominantly a literacy difficulty which affects the ‘skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling’ (J. Rose, 2009, p. 29). Therefore, by the UK media creating a discourse of dyslexia that is separated from literacy, it is creating a bizarre disconnection between the two. Dyslexia is not being constructed as a difficultly with reading, writing, and spelling which makes little sense as this is how dyslexia is defined. Discourse shapes expectations of what is expected by society by the dyslexic subject, again making the dyslexic subject face pressure to be a certain way (creative, entrepreneurial) and this can result in a lack of understanding of the difficulties faced by the dyslexic subject in education and in adult life. This is not limited to people with dyslexia, Shakespeare (2013, pp. 152-153) discusses how dominant media representations of people with autism are portrayed as having compensating skills or aptitudes which are not representative of other people with autism.

More importantly, by constructing dyslexia with no reference to literacy provides an example of how the difficulties faced by people with disabilities are erased by the media and in doing so the media are erasing impairments with positivity and denying the nature of impairment (Shakespeare, 2013).The way in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject have been presented within the NSMC is an example of how disability as a whole is presented within the media and therefore provides a concerning picture of the way disability as a whole is constructed.

8.5 The use of experts in constructing dyslexia and the dyslexic subject

Dyslexia policy and practice are immersed in authoritative discourse (Worthy, Svrcek, et al., 2018). This authoritative discourse is controlled and produced by experts. Indeed, Foucault (1970, p. 52) in his analysis of discourse argues that:

> in every society the production of discourses at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role it is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous formidable materiality

Within this article, Foucault goes onto describe the set of procedures which constrain discourse. One of these constraints is the exclusionary practice between what is deemed true and what is deemed as false. He argues that it is people who are in a position of authority (i.e., experts) who are seen to speak the truth. Those not in a position of power will be considered not to be speaking the truth. Additionally, truth is supported by institutions such as universities and government departments. This section will explore the authoritative discourse found across the SMC and NSMC corpora and will discuss those subjects who have been identified as experts within the UK media.

Foucault (2006) discusses discourse in terms of areas of technical knowledge. In other words, there are specialists with specialised/technical knowledge, and this comes with specialised/technical vocabulary. This is certainly the case with SEN/Disability; **Table 18** and **Table 19** (above) give some examples of the technical discourse used by stakeholders within the SEN/disability field, e.g., statement, SLI, DSA, ADD. Foucault (2013) argues that these technical fields (in this case the field of SEN) have power over people and the discourses they produce have the potential to shape the structure of society. The example given by Foucault is about the discourse of madness which he argues is produced by psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and other experts who define what madness is and in doing so define normalcy. I would argue that SEN/Disability and thus the discourse of dyslexia is constructed in the same way with experts using the media to disseminate their views. Within the SMC and NSMC there were 309 people (170 SMC, 139 NSMC) identified in the diachronic keyword analysis. These are people whose names appeared in the keyword lists and thus could be argued to be the key players in dyslexia discourse within the year that their name appeared. Out of the 309 people 112 of them were psychologists, teachers, headteachers, charity CEOs, professors, researchers, social workers and police officers and only six of these were identified as having dyslexia. I would argue that these are the specialists shaping the discourse of dyslexia within the media and thus would argue that this is an example of how subjects are created and subjected to discourse (Foucault, 1982b, p. 208). Even though students with dyslexia do appear within the corpora (45 of the people across both corpora were students, 31 of which were identified as having dyslexia), their voice within the newspaper articles were often absent with parents (mainly mothers) taking on this role. For example, in the Alexander Faludy case discussed in section 0, his mother talks about his experiences rather than Alexander despite his name appearing in the keyword list.

During the frequency word analysis using stop lists, the words *says* and *said* appeared frequent across both corpora. The presence of the words *says* and *said* indicate that the views of people with dyslexia are reported across both

corpora. Indeed, *says* collocates with the word *dyslexia* 262 times and with *dyslexic* 174 times across both corpora. However, examples from the concordance analysis also show that the views of other powerful actors (Foucault, 1972a) such as The British Dyslexia Association are being sought:

> The association says that, despite growing awareness of a condition that is said to have affected Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci and Winston Churchill, its members report increasing instances of dyslexic children being urged to stay at home "ill" on days when they are due to take the Government's Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) (Owen, 2001).

This raises the question of whether the voices of powerful actors are present more than the dyslexic subjects themselves. To investigate this further a concordance analysis was carried out for the verbs *says* and *said* using the default settings in Wordsmith7.0. However, due to time constraints only the top 50 concordance lines for each of the verbs in each corpus were investigated (200 in total). This was enough to give a general picture of the content within the corpora.

The results from the concordance analysis of the verbs *says* and *said* show that the views of people with dyslexia were present across both corpora as were the views of powerful actors. A breakdown of the differences between the corpora are presented in **Table 23** and **Table 24** (below). These give a summary of the powerful actors present across both corpora. The types of powerful actors were the same across the NSMC and SMC. However, there were more views from professors and researchers in the SMC and more views from parents and guardians in the NSMC.

Table 23: Frequencies of dyslexic people vs powerful actors for the verbs says and said (top 50 concordance lines)

	SMC			NSMC		
	Dyslexic person	Celebrity dyslexic	Powerful actor	Dyslexic person	Celebrity dyslexic	Powerful actor
Says	18	6	50	22	7	29
Said	10	2	91	15	10	26

Table 24: Examples powerful actors and celebrity dyslexics in the corpora

Celebrities	Powerful actors
David Bailey	Professors
Marco Pierre White	Headteachers
Zoe Wannamaker	BDA
Lynda LePlante	Dyslexia Action
Brain Conley	Dyslexia institute
Keira Knightly	Parents/guardians
Jamie Oliver	MPs
Sir Jackie Stewart	Education Minister
Princess Beatrice	DfE

The data shown across **Table 23** and **Table 24** (above) demonstrate that both the views of powerful actors and dyslexic people are sought across both corpora. However, the views of powerful actors are more common across both corpora. Nevertheless, there is a higher number of reports by professors, teachers and headteachers in the SMC compared with the NSMC. Therefore, I would argue that one of the ways in which dyslexia is constructed in the media is through the views of powerful actors rather than through the views of the dyslexic people themselves. The knowledge and truth about dyslexia as reported by the media is constructed *about* dyslexic people rather than constructed *by* dyslexic people. For Foucault, this demonstrates power functions between people, institutions (like the BDA and Dyslexia Action), bureaucracies (education ministers, MPs), and cultural fields (media). I would argue the discourse surrounding dyslexia in the media is being manipulated by these power functions and thus as a result is 'objectivising the [dyslexic] subject' (Foucault, 1976/2000a, p. 326). This form of power, 'categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects' (Foucault, 1976/2000a, p. 331). Dyslexic people

are created and subjected to the discourse created by these power functions (Foucault, 1982a).

In **Table 23** (above) celebrity dyslexics were given their own frequency total. This was because they themselves are discussing their own dyslexia, but I would argue that celebrities would fall into the powerful actor category. Foucault (1982a) argues that powerful actors can have power over discourse regarding a social group such as dyslexic people and can use that power to manipulate the discourse. I would argue that celebrities are uniquely placed within society and thus have the power to create their own discourse around dyslexia. Goffman (1963) argues that when a person in society gains a high status, they can find themselves representing their category (in this case people with dyslexia). He states 'he finds himself too eminent to avoid being presented by his own as an instance of them' (Goffman, 1963, p. 27) and he refers to this process as a new career. One of the powerful actors who appears in my corpus is Richard Branson whose name appears in 264 texts across the corpus. Furthermore, the charity Made by Dyslexia who is 'led by successful dyslexics' (Made by Dyslexia, 2017), has several celebrity supporters and advocates including Richard Branson, Keira Knightly and Orlando Bloom. The aim of the charity is to redefine dyslexia and see it in a more positive light or even as an advantage. Celebrity success stories in the media aid this campaign and reinforce the message that dyslexic people are 'gifted'. This legitimises their stance whilst also suggesting that dyslexia can benefit society as a whole (Elliott, 2020). The media use of famous celebrities links dyslexia with giftedness, creativity and innovation through repetitive discourse. This makes the education of dyslexic children an issue of public interest as they are constructing dyslexia as a benefit for society (Gabriel, 2020).

Celebrities such as Richard Branson can be said to personify the discourse of the dyslexic subject in much the same way as Foucault described the madman or criminal; They share the attributes that we associate with these

subjects at a particular time in history. In terms of Richard Branson and dyslexia we associate the words creativity, entrepreneurship and success with him as a dyslexic subject. Indeed, the fact that dyslexia is becoming associated with words such as genius, creativity, entrepreneurship is how an example of how this type of discourse about dyslexia has become normalised through the use of powerful discourse.

As previously stated in section 8.2, within the corpora there is a high number of articles about what I termed to be the 'celebrity dyslexic'. Indeed, prominent public figures appear frequently within the corpora and are often used as examples of success. For example, when discussing an autobiography by Guy Hands (an entrepreneur who owns one of the largest equity firms in Europe) the reporter states: 'It should be a gripping read. There will be the stories of how he overcame profound dyslexia to build a swashbuckling private equity empire' (Williams, 2017). This kind of language is prominent across the corpus. Indeed, Elliott and Grigorenko (2014, p. 24) argue that frequent references to people with dyslexia who are considered to be 'gifted' (e.g. Albert Einstein, Richard Branson, Thomas Edison) in the media fuels the perception that people with dyslexia are of high intelligence. Therefore, I would argue that this is one of the ways in which the dyslexic subject is constructed within the media.

Charities as experts

This section will investigate the finding that dyslexia charities are often framed as experts within the UK media. The collocation table for the top 10 collocates for the word *dyslexia* in the SMC is shown in Figure 18 with the full list available in appendix 11. **Figure 18** (below) shows this data in a collocation network. The collocation network shows that the words nearest the node (dyslexic) are the strongest collocates. In other words, the closer the collocate is to the node, the stronger the relationship between the word dyslexia and the collocate.

Figure 18: Collocation network of the search term dyslexia in the SMC

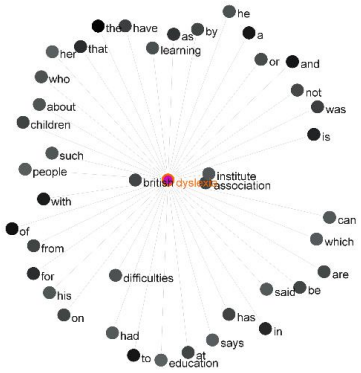


Figure 18 shows that the words with the strongest relationship to the node *dyslexia* are *British*, *association* and *institute*; these refer to the organisations British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and the British Dyslexia Institute UK (BDI). These organisations also appear as strong collocates within the NSMC. Therefore, I would argue that charity discourse dominates the discussion about dyslexia in the media and that in particular, the BDA/BDI have the power to construct their own truth and knowledge about dyslexia because they have positioned themselves within society to have an authoritative voice on dyslexia (Foucault, 1977a). Indeed, earlier research carried out by C. B. Griffiths, Norwich, and Burden (2004, p. 424) found that parents acquired knowledge about dyslexia from voluntary organisations, particularly information about symptoms and solutions and one of the mothers in the study mentions BDI specifically. The implications for teaching practice is that the BDA/BDI construct dyslexia in a way that meets their needs; it is in their interests to make dyslexia a concern of the public rather than the individual as it makes dyslexia a problem with implications for the broader social good and in places it firmly in the interest of the government to address dyslexia in state schools (Gabriel & Woulfin, 2017). One of the ways they do this is by constructing dyslexia as a gift and repeatedly expressing the link between dyslexia and creativity and entrepreneurship. For example, in 2021 the BDA held a webinar titled ‘inspiring dyslexia superpowers’ (BDA, 2021). They also have a promotional video explaining what dyslexia is entitled ‘positives to thinking differently’ and point to ‘strengths in other areas, such as design, problem solving, creative skills, interactive skills and oral skills’ (BDA, 2010) in their own definition of dyslexia. This type of dominating discourse can lead to the misconception of dyslexia as a gift and move the focus away from literacy. The BDA is constructing dyslexia as something to be embraced rather than a disability. Indeed, Gabriel (2020) and Tomlinson (2012) argue that SEN industry and the advocacy for dyslexia has continued to grow over the last decade producing compelling discourse that supports the diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia by private providers rather than educators in state schools. This represents a larger privatisation discourse within education policy (Boyd, 2007). The danger of this type of dyslexia as a

gift discourse is that if it becomes the only true way of knowing about dyslexia it as supresses other knowledges within the field.

This section has discussed the use of authoritative discourse found within the SMC and NSMC. This discussion will continue within the next section which looks at the cures and treatments of dyslexia reported within the UK media and will argue that medical discourse is another form of authoritative discourse which is used to construct the topic of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. As previously stated, during the keyword analysis, certain people were identified as key due to their names occurring in the diachronic keyword list. A total of 309 people were identified and coded within the data with the following information: male/female, dyslexic/not/dyslexic/unknown, and a category given such as teacher, parent etc. Out of the 309 people identified during this research 98 were identified as being dyslexic, 202 were identified as not being dyslexic and 9 were unknown. This means over half (65%) of all the people identified as being key in the corpora were not dyslexic. For Foucault this represents the silences or absent voices in the construction of discourse. G. Rose (2001, p. 157) argues ‘absences can be as productive as explicit naming: invisibility can have just as powerful effects as visibility’. I would argue that in the UK media on dyslexia, the people with dyslexia are largely invisible or at the very least underrepresented. Arguably, the voices of students with dyslexia are more absent with only 36 students appearing as key within the corpora. This is due to the high number of celebrities with dyslexia (51) which present more than half of the people with dyslexia across the corpora. The other key people (teachers, politicians, professors, and researchers) all hold power within Western societies, thus their opinions are sought, and their knowledge valued. Thus, I would conclude that predominately it is those without dyslexia who are the subjects producing the knowledge about dyslexia and that those with dyslexia whose opinions are sought are often in a powerful position within society such as having celebrity status, to promote their own views of what dyslexia is and is not. They are constructing their own ‘truth’ about dyslexia. This would lead me to conclude that the student with dyslexia is positioned as the least powerful person to

construct knowledge about dyslexia. It is the physicians, psychologists, school administrators, teachers and researchers who have the power to shape dyslexia discourse. One of the reasons for this conclusion could be due to the news values presented by Harcup and O'Neill (2001). They found that one of the news values was the power elite; if a news story involved someone in a powerful position the news item was more likely to be reported within the news. In the original nerws values set out by Galtung and Ruge (1965a) the power elite referred to those in a politically powerful position, however, Harcup and O'Neill (2001, p. 10) noted that the 'UK press seems obsessed with celebrities…and royalty' so thus included these news items within the power elite. This study certainly supports this finding.

8.6 Cures and treatments of dyslexia in the SMC and NSMC

This section will discuss the theme of 'cures and treatments' which was identified during the coding of the diachronic keyword analysis. Seven cures and treatments were identified (see **Table 25** below) as being examples of discursive formations. A discursive formation is:

> Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity, we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (Foucault, 1972a, p. 38).

Table 25: Cures and treatments in the SMC and NSMC reported over time

Year	Cure being reported	SMC	NSMC
1985	Treatment using eye movement and glasses	✓	
1993	Treatment using tinted lenses	✓	
1995	Evening Primrose oil		✓
2000	Travel sickness pills	✓	

2002	The Dore Treatment (DDAT)	✓	
2002	Brain Gym exercises (NASA)	✓	✓
2004	Fish Oils	✓	✓
2006	The Dore Treatment (DDAT)		✓

I would argue that these 'cures and treatments' are examples of discursive formations because they were identified as key during the keyword analysis and this means that the words associated with the cures and treatments had a statistically significantly high frequency in the years where they were reported. I would also argue that the cures and treatments were examples of thematic choices that had a form of regularity across the corpora.

According to Foucault (1980, p. 176) 'normalisation is a form of rehabilitation' that favours a particular way of being at the expense of others. The emphasis on cures and treatments in the UK media is reinforcing the norm through repetitive news reports about cures and treatments. This section will discuss some of the cures and treatments specifically found within the corpora and will also compare some of the findings reported in the news items with academic research. **Table 26** and **Table 27** (below) show the diachronic keywords for the category of medical/health in each of the corpora. These tables show that there are four mutual words across both tables: genetic, gene/genes, mental, drug/drugs and cure. The words gene/genes and genetics in both corpora are related to the same discursive event; scientists have discovered the gene for dyslexia. Although in the NSMC this is reported in 1994 (Radford, 1994) and in the SMC this is reported in 2005 (Hinds, 2005), it seems to be research by the same team of American scientists (Schumacher et al., 2006). However, this is not noticeably clear within the articles where the idea presented is that dyslexia can be attributed to a single gene but there are approximately 20 different genomic regions (which can contain hundreds of single genes) which are currently being considered candidate genes for dyslexia (Rubenstein, Matsushita, Berninger, Raskind, & Wijsman, 2011). This has led Elliott and

Grigorenko (2014, p. 115) to argue that 'there is mixed evidence for the involvement of each of these genes, and findings have proven difficult to interpret in a systematic way'. Despite caution in the research community over these claims, the media have not taken the same level of caution but rather presented the research as fact. They do this by using scientific discourse which assumes a certain level of authority, truth, and fact. For example, one news item in the corpus states 'last week, a team of U.S. scientists published their research in pinpointing a gene for dyslexia' (Slater, 1994). The use of words like *scientist* and *research* hold power as truth because scientific research has a powerful status within society; it has connotations of prestige, reliability, knowledge and truth. It gives a degree of automatic acceptance by the public; there is an acceptance of scientific discourse in society which leads to the emergence of forms of knowledge and experts (this is discussed above in section 0) who are given rights to speak and thus create knowledge. Indeed, Foucault (1972a, p. 204) in Archaeology of Knowledge discusses the link between science and knowledge. He argues that there is a specific relation between the two within a discursive formation and that there is a 'hierarchical order of power associated with science' (Foucault, 1980, p. 85). Thus, Foucault has linked scientific discourse with power as well as knowledge. Science and words from medical discourse can also intimidate and silence open conversation due to their authoritative nature (Baglieri, Valle, Connor, & Gallagher, 2011).

Table 26: Top 20 keywords in SMC relating to the theme of medical and health

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	Drug/Drugs	72	8.05
2	Treatment	67	7.49
3	Mental	53	5.92
4	Brain	44	4.92
5	Left	38	4.25
6	Emotional	36	4.02
7	Neuroscience	34	3.80

8	Eye	27	3.02
9	Cure	26	2.91
10	Therapeutic	26	2.91
11	Cerebellum	19	2.12
12	Genetic	17	1.90
13	Neuroscientists	16	1.79
14	Wellbeing	15	1.68
15	Medication	15	1.68
16	Ear	14	1.56
17	Gene	12	1.34
18	Ritalin	11	1.23
19	Alzheimer's	10	1.12
20	Pills	8	0.89

Table 27: Top 20 keywords in NSMC relating to the theme of Medical and Health

	Keyword	Raw Frequency	Normalised frequency
1	Brain	177	2.57
2	Gene/Genes	131	1.90
3	Mental	89	1.29
4	Fish	73	1.06
5	Psychologist/Psychologists	65	0.94
6	Drug	53	0.77
7	Human	50	0.72
8	Anxiety	49	0.71
9	Genetic	47	0.68
10	Diet	45	0.65
11	Cure	44	0.64
12	Exercises	38	0.55
13	M	28	0.41
14	Patients	28	0.41
15	Ultrasound	27	0.39
16	Scientists	27	0.39
17	Reflex/Reflexes	21	0.30
18	Diagnose	21	0.30
19	Routine	18	0.26
20	Stroke	17	0.25

The word ‘cure’ appears in both corpora and indeed the idea of dyslexia cures appeared as a theme when coding the data for the diachronic keyword

analysis. This is despite the fact that researchers agree that there is no cure for dyslexia and that systematic intervention with a strong emphasis on phonics is the best approach to help children and ‘significantly reduce the proportion of children who are later considered to be reading disabled’ (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014, p. 164). The cures found within the corpora are listed above in Table 25. The table shows that the idea of cures and treatments fluctuate across the years in the corpus with the first two (eye movement and tinted lenses and glasses) being reported as treatments and the rest being reported as cures. Taking the fish oil cure as an example because it occurred across both corpora and received a lot of media attention, occurring on news reports on Channel 4 as well as ITV (Goldacre, 2009), it gained academic criticism (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014) and follow up research (Everatt & Reid, 2009; Kairaluoma, Närhi, Ahonen, Westerholm, & Aro, 2009). The claim of the cure was the fatty acids in fish oil capsules had been proven to help children with dyslexia. This was following research carried out by Dr Richardson and Dr Montgomery which was later published in the academic journal *Paediatrics* (A. J. Richardson & Montgomery, 2005). The news reports contained examples of scientific discourse such as:

> ‘More recent research has highlighted the specific benefits to the brain of the fatty acids in fish, particularly in children with behavioural or learning difficulties. ‘Fish and seafood are the only readymade sources of the essential Omega 3 fatty acids EPA and DHA which we need for our brains,' explains Dr Alex Richardson, a neuroscientist based at Oxford University’ (Power, 2004).

In the above quote, words and phrases used such as *neuroscientist*, *oxford university*, and *EPA and DHA* all give the news report and thus the cure credibility. Despite the fact that the research had been criticised for ‘poor research design, the use if correlational data, and a lack of clear focus of the development of reading skills’ (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014, pp. 156-157). The article quoted above goes onto mention clinical trials and doctors having the ability to prescribe fish oil capsules to children with learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. Dr Richardson is quoted as saying ‘I don't want

people to think it is a miracle cure' (Power, 2004) just before the article then goes onto describe a four year old called Hope who had been diagnosed with dyspraxia, autistic tendencies and global learning difficulties. Before the fish oils she was described as having difficulties with speech, eye contact and memory but after the she had been taking a 'high dosage' of fish oils she 'suddenly she was engaged with the world. Her hair and skin became radiant and she looked the picture of health. Two years later, she remains a different person. It is almost as if she was blind and now she can see (Power, 2004). So even though the researcher explicitly stated that fish oils are not a miracle cure, the article went onto describe it as a miracle cure even referencing the miracle of sight after being blind. In this case, the fish oil capsules are being constructed as a cure using scientific discourse and the use of success stories using the structure much like the weight loss narratives described by Gabriel (2020) and discussed in section 0. This type of narrative and construction of the fish oils as a miracle cure occurred across many of the news items within the corpora. However, there were a few follow up reports in the corpora on the research carried out that discredited the claims of the fish oil cure (e.g. (Bishop, 2008)). Nevertheless, out of the 52 reports found within the corpora using the search term 'fatty acids' only 1 disputed the claims of the cure. Indeed, all of the cures and treatments which appeared within the corpora (see table 21) have been criticised within academic research (see Elliott and Grigorenko (2014), Elliott (2014), Christenson, Griffin, and Taylor (2001)). However, only the Dore Treatment (DDAT) and the fish oils cure received follow up reports in the news reporting the research that was carried out discussing the design flaws within the original reports. This means that the other cures were not followed up when they were rebutted within research. This is quite concerning as it highlights the fact that there is a disparity between what is happening in research and what is being reported in the press, an idea which is not new and has been reported in other research (Worthy et al., 2021). Confounding this problem is the fact that most research into dyslexia is not carried out by educators but by physicians, psychologists and neuropsychologists (Worthy, Salmerón, et al., 2018). In terms of cures, treatments, and the single gene for dyslexia, this could have major implications for teaching practice. Most of these cures

and treatments appeared in the SMC. The limitations of these cures and treatments were not reported in the news reports which could lead to the misunderstanding that dyslexia can be cured.

Another one of the cures and treatments which occurred within the corpora was the use of coloured lenses and overlays for the treatment of dyslexia. The idea behind the technology is to reduce the visual stress and increase reading speed through the use of individually prescribed lenses or overlays (Wilkins, Lewis, Smith, Rowland, & Tweedie, 2001). Although a systematic literature review by P. G. Griffiths, Taylor, Henderson, and Barrett (2016, p. 519) concluded that 'the use of coloured lenses or overlays to ameliorate reading difficulties cannot be endorsed and that any benefits reported by individuals in clinical settings are likely to be the result of placebo, practice or Hawthorne effects.' However, much like the fish oil cures discussed above, the news items in the corpora predominately focused on the 'cure'. For example:

> But visual treatments with coloured overlays can improve reading by two years in a single year, so children quickly catch up with their friends.
> Pure yellow and pure blue overlays are best - and the latest study from the Dyslexia Research Trust with yellow filters, shows an increase in reading age of 8.5 months in just three months (Stoppard, 2003).

This extract again shows how the media use authoritative discourse to further their claims, with this newspaper article citing research from the Dyslexia Research Trust.

Discursive formations centred around cures could potentially lead to schools spending money and resources on things like coloured overlays which have not been scientifically proven to have an effect on a child's reading skills

(Vellutino, Fletcher, Snowling, & Scanlon, 2004). Indeed, a study by Washburn et al. (2013, p. 6) found that 'an overwhelming majority of teachers indicated that coloured overlays/tinted lenses would help individuals with dyslexia'. The word 'overlay' was a keyword in the SMC in 2013 (see Table 18). Furthermore, studies by Washburn et al. (2013), Hudson et al. (2007); Serry and Hammond (2015) have found that the most common misunderstanding about dyslexia in education is that it is primarily a visual deficit and that it involved the reversal and movement of letters on the page. The news reports involving tinted lenses, coloured overlays and eye movement exercise could have contributed to this misunderstanding but further research to investigate this link would be needed. Additionally, research by Sümer Dodur and Altindağ Kumaş (2020) and Washburn et al. (2013) also found that the majority of teachers within their studies had the misconception that dyslexia is a temporary condition. Again, the news reports around treatments and cures could contribute to this misunderstanding but further research is needed.

From a Foucauldian perspective media, when reporting news about treatments/cures of dyslexia, are constructing dyslexia as a condition which can be treated/cured. This is supported further with the presence of the verb *was* during the frequency word analysis (see

Table 9 above). Alongside dyslexia the verb *was* implies that dyslexia is curable and/or not a lifelong condition. Upon closer inspection of the verb 'was' in context, (using concordance analysis) the following examples were found:

> 'Joshua, 10, was dyslexic'
>
> 'Esther, then aged 11, was slightly dyslexic'

Indeed, a collocation analysis for the verb *was* shows that it appears alongside the word *dyslexic* 1797 times across both corpora. **Table 28** (below) shows a comparison between the verb *was* and the verb *is* using the frequency word lists. It shows that there are differences between the two corpora, with the NSMC having a higher frequency of the verbs *was* and *had* compared with *is* and *has*, whilst the SMC is the other way around. This is somewhat reassuring that the SMC is not misreporting that dyslexia is a temporary condition as much as in the NSMC. However, there is still a quite high incidence of examples like the ones above within the SMC. Dyslexia is therefore, being constructed across all media as being a condition that someone has had and not as the lifelong condition which it is. In other words, the media are reinforcing the misconception that dyslexia is a temporary condition. In Foucauldian terms, they are forming their own truth and knowledge about dyslexia through repetitive discourse. The media are using their power to produce a particular form of knowledge about dyslexia (Foucault, 1980). Indeed, Washburn et al. (2013) and more recently Sümer Dodur and Altindağ Kumaş (2020) both found that the majority of teachers in their studies incorrectly believed that dyslexia was a temporary condition indicating that teachers need more training with regards to dyslexia.

Table 28: The verb 'was'

	SMC				NSMC			
Word	No in frequency word list	Raw frequency	Normalised frequency	Dispersion	No in frequency word list	Raw frequency	Normalised frequency	Dispersion
Was	15	6217	695	0.95	9	8351	1211	0.99
Is	7	10942	1223	0.97	11	70183	1017	0.99
Had	41	2590	289	0.99	24	30050	436	0.98
Has	29	3724	416	0.98	27	28919	419	0.99

This finding that there is a focus on cures for dyslexia in the media fits in with the imagery of miracle cures in the cultural representations of disability (Shakespeare, 2013). Disability activists challenge this obsession with cures for disability. They argue that:

- Disability is about social barriers and social oppression, not impairment.
- The priority is structural change, not altering individuals to conform to social norms.
- Cure discourse individualises and pathologises impairment (Shakespeare, 2013, p. 137)

Within the media this obsession with cures can lead to an unbalanced view of disability and can result in the neglect of political issues surrounding difficulties faced by those with disabilities. This research has shown that the media have focused on unproven research and miracle cures for dyslexia which can have a negative impact on those with dyslexia.

This section has also shown that the UK media are creating their own 'truth' about dyslexia which meets the needs of their own agendas which is to sell newspapers. MacLure (2003, p. 175) argues that 'knowledge is produced by and for particular interests, in particular circumstances.' A cure for dyslexia would be an attention-grabbing news story which would meet some of the news values outlined by Harcup and O'Neill (2001). Although Foucault (1973), was not primarily concerned with what constitutes the truth he did go onto argue that in Western societies truth is characterised by five traits: scientific discourse, economical and political demands, its circulation through social institutions, its control by a 'few great political and economic apparatus', and 'ideological struggles' (Foucault, 1976/2000b, p. 131). I would argue that when constructing dyslexia as curable, the media are in a powerful position to meet these five traits which results in them creating their own truth about dyslexia and within their system of power they can 'produce and sustain it' making it become a 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1976/2000b, p. 132).

8.7 Summary

This chapter began by discussing the corpora designed for this research project. An overview was given showing that the final sub-corpora differed in size with the NSMC being much larger. The formula for normalising the frequency scores was given to remediate this difference. The spikes in frequency for each year were investigated and the discursive events were listed. A discussion of the analysis carried out using frequency lists generated using Wordsmith 7.0 followed. The main findings from this analysis were that the words *dyslexia* and *dyslexic* were evenly distributed across the corpora, male pronouns were more common than their female counterparts, the verbs *was* and *is* were more frequent in the NSMC when compared to the verbs *had* and *has,* whereas in the NSMC the findings were the other way around, and finally the verbs *says* and *said* show that the views of dyslexic people are reported within the media but less often than powerful actors such as teachers, the BDA and leading researchers. The research that followed identified key themes found within the data which were the school as a site of failure, the lack of literacy discourse, the use of experts in constructing dyslexia, cures and treatments of dyslexia and the use of empowering and deficit discourse across the media types.

In summary, the ways in which the NSMC and the SMC construct dyslexia are vastly different. The NSMC focuses on celebrities with dyslexia, emphasising dyslexia as a gift using empowering discourse. In the NSMC the media use their power within society to produce the dyslexic subject as an entrepreneurial, creative being who can be hugely successful and a benefit to society positioning dyslexia as a public concern. This is an example of how individual identities become the products of power (Foucault, 1975c). The SMC take more of a negative stance and focus on the extra resources children with dyslexia need within education. They use deficit discourse and language of impairment. Children with dyslexia are identified as having differing needs compared to ‘ordinary’ children with special education focusing on difference and a deviation from the ‘norm’ creating a

dividing practice (Foucault, 1982a) between these two groups of children subjecting the ‘othered’ children to further surveillance and ‘discipline normalisation’ (Foucault, 1975a). Therefore, the SMC construct dyslexia and thus the dyslexic subject in a much more negative way compared with the NSMC. This could be due to a reflection of archaic disciplinary power in education whereby discipline is used to control children through the use of aspects such as the timetable and the architecture of the classroom (Foucault, 1977b). Foucault (2004b, p. n.p) also argues that ‘the norm is what can be applied to both the body that desires discipline, as well as to the population that desires regularisation’. Thus, the norm is another example of disciplinary power used to control children with dyslexia.

9 Conclusions and implications

The research reported in this thesis aimed to explore the ways in which dyslexia as a topic, and the dyslexic subject had been constructed in the UK media. Two different media types were investigated: specialist media aimed at teaching professionals and mainstream media aimed at the general public. The aim of the research was to compare how differently these two media types constructed dyslexia and the dyslexic subject over time (between 1974 and 2017).

The UK media was selected as a source of investigation due to the power of the media to influence and disseminate knowledge and information. Indeed, recent events such as the coronavirus pandemic and BREXIT have highlighted the power and influence that the media have in today's society to construct knowledge and influence opinion. From a Foucauldian perspective media is an example of a technology of power, particularly disciplinary power (Foucault, 1977b) whereby power is exercised over others as well as over oneself. The media uses its power to shape knowledge, create subjects and claim truths (Danaher et al., 2000). Furthermore, it has been argued that the media are key to understanding disability (Ellis & Goggin, 2015).

During the literature review on dyslexia, it was revealed that the meaning of the term dyslexia is not clear and has led to confusion and uncertainty in its definition and use within education, psychology and medicine. This thesis identified (in chapter two) that dyslexia as a concept has been contested since its original conception in 1862 and discussed the history of the concept. Despite this confusion, research has shown that the dyslexic identity is constructed in relation to literacy, intelligence and socio-economic success. However, this relation to literacy was not found within the data for this research (Campbell, 2013; Thompson et al., 2015). Indeed, the lack of literacy discourse was identified as a theme in this research. It was found that there were no keywords associated with literacy skills at all across the

mainstream media. This led to the conclusion that mainstream media was constructing dyslexia not as a problem but rather as a gift to be embraced.

This thesis was carried out from a Foucauldian perspective, which means that Foucault's concepts of discourse, power, knowledge, truth and normalisation were central to this research.

This chapter begins by providing a reflection on the methodology and methods of analysis before discussing the limitations of the study. Recommendations for further research will be outlined before moving onto a summary of the implications for teaching practice. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the main findings of this thesis.

9.1 Reflections on methodology and methods of analysis

This study employed a combined methodology of corpus linguistics and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. It therefore used both a quantitative and qualitative approach to the data and by triangulating the methods a more in-depth analysis was possible.

The corpus linguistics analysis allowed a large data set to be analysed, a total of 8283 texts were analysed totalling 7,793,561 words across 43 years. This depth of data meant that patterns in the language used to construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject were able to be explored. Indeed, many repetitive discourses (such as the school as a site of failure) were identified which may have been missed if FDA had been used on its own.

The corpora were designed and built by me especially for this research project. The process was a steep learning curve having not built a corpus before. The online training I attended (McEnery & Brezina, 2018) through Lancaster University and FutureLearn was invaluable in helping me learn the

process of building a corpus from scratch. Although, a considerably time-consuming project, the final corpora have been useful in answering the research questions for this thesis as well as having the potential for further research into the media and dyslexia. Building the corpora from scratch also meant that I obtained a detailed visual knowledge of the data contained within it which helped identify themes early in the research process.

The FDA element of this study was a bit more of a challenge since Foucault did not prescribe a set of methods to apply archaeology and genealogy. This meant that there is a lot of different interpretations on how to apply FDA in the literature. It was decided to follow G. Rose (2001) because she had applied Foucault's methods and broken them down into steps which could be followed. Indeed, the process of applying FDA to the data in the corpus came naturally when investigating the different discourses present within the corpora due to looking at the data using a Foucauldian lens. Overall, I would argue that the combination of CL and FDA worked well to answer the research questions presented within the corpora. I would also argue that building my own corpora was a worthwhile project due to the use the corpora will have in further research.

9.2 Limitations of the study

In all research there are limitations, and this study is no exception. One of the main limitations of this study is that it only focused on media in the UK making generalisations to other countries' media and education systems more difficult. There are currently a lot of interesting changes happening in the US (for example) with education policy and dyslexia, particularly with the introduction of the dyslexia law which proposes identification, intervention, accommodations, funding and the introduction of dyslexia specialists (Worthy, Salmerón, et al., 2018). It would be interesting to see, for example, the media reaction to these laws and what types of discourses they are using to report (and possibly promote) these dyslexia laws.

Another limitation found in this study was that the dyslexic subjects and how they themselves construct their dyslexic identity was not investigated as it was outside of the remit of this thesis. Additionally, it was also found that experts were used to construct the dyslexic identity which meant that the dyslexic subject was not really prominent within the data so the ways in which they construct their own identities could not be investigated. A different method would have to be employed to investigate how dyslexic individuals become subjects through the use of discourse (Foucault, 1978, 1985, 1986). A comparison could then be carried out to see if there are differences and similarities to the findings in this research.

The reactions of the readers and educationalists to the news reports was also a limitation to this study. We have no way of knowing how the news reports have been interpreted by readers or educationalists without further research.

9.3 Recommendations for follow-up studies

This research has investigated how dyslexia as a concept has been socially constructed in specialist and non-specialist media discourse. My contention was also to investigate how dyslexic subjects are created through media discourse. However, since my study was looking at pessimistic Foucault and how subjects are created through discourse, the study did not investigate how dyslexic subjects position themselves or become creators (or to use the Foucauldian term ‘actors’) of discourse. In other words, this research focused on how dyslexic subjects are subjected to the discourse found in the media. Therefore, there is scope for further research in this field which focuses on how people with dyslexia create their own discourses: if the media is a technology of power, how does it regulate the conduct of the dyslexic subject?

This thesis focused on how dyslexia and the dyslexic subject was constructed in mainstream media and specialist media targeted at educational professionals. Social media was not a source for investigation. However, since social media is continuing to be an area of growth, it could be worthwhile to investigate how dyslexia and the dyslexic subject are being constructed on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Possible areas of research include:

- Is there evidence of schools and the education system being constructed as a site of failure for dyslexic children?
- On social media is their evidence of empowering and deficit discourse? Which one is more dominant?
- Is there more evidence of dyslexic subjects constructing their own discourse on dyslexia or is dyslexia still being constructed predominantly by experts?

Further work is needed to explore any potentially effective generalisation of the findings of this study, to see if it can be applied more broadly in other media settings such as social media and in other places in the world. It would also be useful to explore how dyslexic individuals become subjects through the use of discourse and social media could potentially be a good source for this investigation. Additionally, an investigation into the discourse of teachers and how they socially construct dyslexia would be a useful follow-up study.

With these future directions for further research about the dyslexic subject and the topic of dyslexia in the media, the understanding of dyslexia could be advanced to contribute to the usefulness of the term as well as gaining a better understanding of what the term means to people with dyslexia as well as those educationalists who teach children with dyslexia.

9.4 Implications for teaching practice

The preceding chapter (chapter 7) has discussed several implications this research has for teaching practice. A summary of which has been included below:

- State schools and the UK education system has become associated with negative discourse and the inability to diagnose and help children with dyslexia at a young age.
- Suing schools and LEAs become the norm resulting in large sums of money being paid out in compensation leaving less money in the education budget to support schools.
- Dyslexia becomes associated with males, and it becomes known as a male disability.
- Experts become more important than dyslexic people in constructing dyslexia making them invisible.
- Dyslexia becomes associated with gifts such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship making the label sought after and the problems faced by dyslexic children pushed to the background of the discussions.
- There becomes a common misunderstanding that dyslexia can be cured using things like fatty acid capsules or coloured overlays leading to parents and teaching professionals wasting money and being misled.
- Deficit discourse becomes more common within education (as reflected in the media) and the cost of support is overemphasized leading to friction between those who get specialised funded support and those who do not.
- Empowering discourse becomes more common (as reflected in the media) and the ‘gifts’ of dyslexia become more prominent than the difficulties.

In light of the research findings, I would argue that more communication is needed to link research with practice so that misunderstandings about dyslexia are not filtered down from the media into teaching practice. More interaction with the media from educationalists and researchers may ameliorate some of the misrepresentation of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject in the media. Furthermore, education is needed about the role of the media so that news reports are looked at more critically and not taken at face value especially when considering the cumulative effect of discourse.

9.5 Summary of main findings

In the introductory chapter, I outlined my research questions for this thesis. They were as follows:

1. How is the concept of dyslexia discursively constructed in specialist and non-specialist media discourse in the UK?
    a. How are dyslexic subjects discursively constructed in UK print media?
    b. To what extent do the discourses of dyslexia in UK specialist and non-specialist media change over time?

Research question 1b (above) shows that one of the purposes of this research was to investigate the changes over time in the way in which dyslexia and the dyslexic subject have been constructed in the media. It was found that there were no striking differences in the ways dyslexia and the dyslexic subjects had been constructed overtime across both the NSMC and the SMC. Therefore, the discourse surrounding dyslexia and the dyslexic subject remained relatively stable, drawing on similar types of discourses between 1975-2017.

This study found that the ways in which the NSMC and SMC constructed the topic of dyslexia, and the dyslexic subject were different. The NSMC and SMC had no shared keywords which is an unusual finding. This presented the conclusion that they must draw on different discourses when discussing dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. This conclusion was supported with evidence from the diachronic keyword analysis whereby the keywords were sorted into different categories and tracked overtime. The most popular categories for the NSMC were politics, crime and law whereas in the SMC the most popular categories were education, SEN and disability. Both news types sharing the common category of medical and health. Indeed, in the NSMC, the language used to construct dyslexia and the dyslexic subject was from sport, film and TV leading to the conclusion that mainstream media drew on the celebrity culture popular within Western societies. However, the SMC used language based on educational discourse. Once again showing further evidence of the differences between the two media types.

Several themes developed over the course of this research project. One such theme was the construction of the school and the education system as a site of failure for dyslexic children. They have been portrayed as either failing to meet the needs of the dyslexic child or failing to diagnose dyslexia early enough to have a positive impact on the child's education. One of the ways in which the news reports have constructed education as a site of failure is through the use of success stories which typically follow a before and after narrative (much like that of weight loss advertisements). In these types of narratives, the person with dyslexia has been branded as 'thick' at school but later on in life has become a successful entrepreneur (e.g., Richard Branson), chef (e.g., Jamie Oliver) or photographer (e.g., David Bailey) to name a few examples. Their success is often framed as being despite having dyslexia and despite failing at school. Indeed, one of the themes discussed in this thesis is the repetitive examples used in the newspaper articles of children leaving school with little or no qualifications mainly due to undiagnosed dyslexia.

Another way in which schools and the education system have been constructed as a site of failure in the UK media is through the use of juxtaposition to frame the state school as a failure and the private school as a site of success. This again, has primarily been presented using success stories and a before/after type of narrative where the child has failed in state school but went on to succeed in private school (see the Ruth Kelly example discussed in section 8.1 for an example). Furthermore, private schools are framed as being able to provide specialist teaching and resources that state schools cannot, adding further to the discourse of failure for state schools. In framing state and private schools in this way, the UK media are promoting a segregated education system rather than an inclusive one.

Additionally, this study also found evidence of repetitive discourse surrounding the suing of schools and LEAs. Mostly, these news stories were concerning someone who had been diagnosed with dyslexia as an adult and were suing their LEA for failing to diagnose them as a child so that they could receive the appropriate support. In most of these cases, the claimant was successful at suing the LEA, meaning that the law courts had also agreed that the LEA/school had failed that person as a child. This sends a strong message that schools are not doing enough to support and diagnose children with dyslexia and once again adds to the discourse of failure surrounding schools in the UK media.

I would argue that the evidence presented in this thesis has demonstrated that the UK media (particularly mainstream media) have created a ‘regime of truth’ (Foucault, 1976/2000b, p. 131) surrounding schools and the education system in the UK in which they have accepted ‘made true’ and ‘sanctioned’ their own discourse of failure concerning schools and the education system and how they react, diagnose and meet the needs of children with dyslexia. They use their power and status within society to give value to what they see as true and what version of the truth meets their needs, which in this case is

to sell newspapers. The danger of this type of negative discourse is that it becomes ‘normalised’ through the use of discursive formations (success stories, suing of LEAs) and repetitive discourse. In other words, there is a danger that this way of thinking becomes a norm and the accepted way of thinking which can have significant damage to how the education system is perceived by children and parents.

A theme which has been identified in this thesis as needing further research is male dominance in the UK press. This finding supported research by Scott and Tribble (2006) who also found a male dominance in the Guardian newspaper. This thesis identified that there were slightly more male key players compared to women. It also found that there were nearly double male key players in a position of power (145) compared with women (75).

This thesis has highlighted the role of key players (e.g., BDA, professors, parents, celebrities) in constructing dyslexia discourse. These key players often have an authoritative voice due to their position in society (Foucault, 1977a). They thus have the power to control and produce their own version of knowledge and truth about dyslexia. The knowledge and truth that these key players construct meets their own personal agendas (e.g., journalists have the primary aim of writing articles that help the newspaper to sell, success stories which use the weight loss structure and before and after narrative meet this aim) and is perhaps not always in the interests of the dyslexic subject or the education system. Indeed, there is more evidence of experts constructing the discourse about dyslexia than dyslexic people themselves. In fact, one third (112 out of 309) of all the people identified as key players during the diachronic keyword analysis were considered to be an expert rather than as a person with dyslexia themselves. Another finding was that celebrities have become representatives of dyslexic people in the UK media. They have become the embodiment of what it means to be dyslexic. However, these celebrity associations focus on the ‘gifts’ associated with dyslexia such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship and fail to take

into account the difficulties experienced by many dyslexic children in learning to read, write and spell. The implication for teaching practice here is that dyslexia is positioned as being a positive disorder and the label becomes 'cherished' (Gibbs & Elliott, 2010) and sought after. Funding can then be misappropriated or distributed unfairly among those who have the label and those who do not but still require support creating a divide. Furthermore, seeing dyslexia as a positive disorder could lead to an increase in demand in assessments for dyslexia which can cost between £540 and £720 (BDA), leading many to argue that the money schools are spending on assessments could be better spent on resources helping all struggling readers to learn to read (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014; Gibbs & Elliott, 2020).

Most researchers/academics working in the field of dyslexia agree that there is no cure for dyslexia and that a systematic intervention with a strong emphasis on phonics is the best approach to help children and 'significantly reduce the proportion of children who are later considered to be reading disabled' (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014, p. 164). However, a theme revealed within this thesis was that the UK media repeatedly reported 'miracle cures' for dyslexia such as the use of fatty acids, coloured overlays and eye movement exercises. These cures were reported and not always supported with evidence from research. Often these cures were criticised in academic research but did not appear to receive the same level of scrutiny in the news items reported in this thesis. Indeed, the news reports found within this thesis often reported these cures using scientific language and medical discourse, giving the news reports an air of validity, truth, knowledge and acceptance as there is a 'hierarchical order of power associated with science' (Foucault, 1980, p. 85) which can lead to automatic acceptance or at the least less questioning by the reader. It was concluded that discourse surrounding cures can lead to the misunderstanding that dyslexia is curable and can result in people wasting money on fad cures that are not scientifically proven to work.

Evidence of both empowering and deficit discourse was found across both corpora, with differences between the SMC and NSMC being prominent. It was found that overall, the SMC used more deficit discourse drawing from the medical model of disability and medical discourse which draw upon the idea that the person with the disability needs to reform to the norm and thus be treated and cured. This becomes a discursive practice which divides the population into normal and deviant (Foucault, 1982b). On the other hand, the NSMC used more empowering discourse, drawing on charity discourse which advocated dyslexia as a benefit of society rather than the individual by constructing it as a gift. Once again promoting dyslexia as a positive disorder to be embraced.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Newspapers in the UK

Table 29: UK newspaper summary

Newspaper	Frequency of publication	Daily Readership (000s)[9]	Social class of readership[10]	Political affiliation	Political party support in 2019 General Election
Broadsheets					
Independent	Daily	4091	ABC1	Liberal	Labour/LibDem
The Telegraph	Daily	3020	ABC1	Centre-right, conservative	Conservative Party
The Guardian	Daily	5360	ABC1	Centre-left	LibDem
The Business[11]	Weekly	Not available	Not available	N/A	N/A
Compacts					

[9] Pamco (2020). Data is from April 2019 - March 2020

[10] see table X for explanation for social grades

[11] The Business newspaper stopped publishing in 2008

The Times	Daily	2580	ABC1	Centre-right, conservative	Conservative party
I	Daily	1123	ABC1	Centre	None
Tabloids					
Daily Express	Daily	3739	C2DE	Right-wing	Conservative Party
Daily Mail	Daily	8503	C2DE	Right-wing, Conservative	Conservative Party
Daily Mirror	Daily	6641	C2DE	Centre-left	Labour Party
Daily Star	Daily	1564	C2DE	Non-political	None
The Sun	Daily	9440	C2DE	Right-wing	Conservative Party
People	Weekly	Not available	ABC1	None	None
Freesheets					
Metro	Daily	4547	ABC1	Non-political	None
City UK	Daily	Not available	Not available	Centre-right, Conservative	None
Supplements					

TES	Weekly	371[12]	Not available	N/A	N/A

[12] TES readership profile: Figures are from April 2009 – March 2010 (NRS) (TES, 2010)

Table 30: Social grade classifications (The Publishers Audience Measurement Company Ltd (PAMCo), 2018)

Social Classification code	Explanation	% of population (Jan-Dec 2017)
A	Higher managerial, administrative and professional	5
B	Intermediate managerial, administrative and professional	23
C1	Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative and professional	28
C2	Skilled manual workers	20
D	Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	15
E	State pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only	9

Appendix 2: A summary of the key players and events in the development of the term 'dyslexia'

Year	Name	Term employed	Field	Contribution
1862	Professor Rudolf Berlin	Dyslexia	Medicine	First identified examples of dyslexia in adult patients
1872	Broadbent	Word blindness	Medicine	First identified a patient who could no longer read after experiencing aphasia
1877	Kussmaul	Acquired word blindness	Medicine	Also identified a patient who could no longer read after experiencing aphasia
1895	Hinshelwood	Word blindness Dyslexia	Medicine	First assistant eye surgeon to investigate dyslexia
1896	Dr Pringle Morgan	Congenital word blindness	Medicine	Identifies dyslexia as being present from birth
1902	Hinshelwood	Word blindness	Education	Links dyslexia to education and learning to read
1905	Thomas	Word blindness	Medicine	First to identify that dyslexia is hereditary
1906	Jackson	Developmental alexia	Medicine	Defines developmental alexia in terms of difficulties acquiring literacy skills
1907	Witmer	Amnesia visualis verbalis Congenital verbal amnesia	Educational psychology	Firmly places dyslexia in the field of psychology and challenges earlier medical terms
1914	Schmitt	Dyslexia Congenital word blindness	Educational psychology	First paper published in a learning journal
1925	Orton	Dyslexia	Educational psychology	Influential in moving dyslexia into educational psychology remit
1927	Minogue	Dyslexia	Educational psychology	Influential in moving dyslexia into educational psychology remit
1928	Ford	Dyslexia	Influential in moving dyslexia into educational psychology remit	First to identify that dyslexia as socio-environmental factors.

Appendix 3: LexisNexis source information (sample)

Source Information

The Mirror (The Daily Mirror and The Sunday Mirror)

COVERAGE: From May 29, 1995 through current

COVERAGE-TYPE: Full-text

FREQUENCY: Daily; Monday - Sunday

UPDATE-SCHEDULE: Same day

LANGUAGE: English

CONTENT-SUMMARY:

Access to certain freelance articles and other features within this publication (i.e. photographs, classifieds, etc...) may not be available.

Founded in 1903, the Daily Mirror is one of Great Britain's largest tabloid newspapers. Best described as a national, mass market newspaper, it has almost nine million adult readers a day. Coverage includes local, national, and international reporting of news, sports and features, with greatest emphasis on British material. Traditionally, the Daily Mirror is a left of center newspaper, and is the only popular daily that supports the Labour Party. In the Daily Mirror, you will find coverage of a wide range of topics from politics, economics, and foreign affairs, to sport, fashion and people. Among its distinguished correspondents are Marje Proops, Michael Parkinson, and Anne Robinson. The Sunday Mirror comprises news, features, and sport as above. In addition, there are regular features from advice columnist Virginia Ironside, humorist Jeffrey Barnard, sports columnist Bill Clark, and commentary from Colin Wills.

For the Irish Edition, user should run search on Edition(Eire) or Edition(Ulster).

PUBLISHER:
Trinity Mirror plc

SEGMENT-DESCRIP:

BODY	The BODY segment contains the text of a story.
	body(us airliner and crash)
BYLINE	The BYLINE segment contains the name of the person or entity indentified as the author of the document, as well as any biographical information.
	byline(bill daniels)
DATE	The DATE segment contains the publication date. This segment is date searchable and sortable.
	date=10/12/14
GRAPHIC	The GRAPHIC segment contains any information relating to pictures, illustrations, maps, cartoons, ect. that are associated with a document.
	graphic(map)
HEADLINE	The HEADLINE segment contains all headings and subheadings which describe a story.

Appendix 4: LexisNexis document (sample)

Download Request: Tagged Documents: 1-2

Time Of Request: Friday, May 04, 2018 11:20:10

Send To:

Terms: (dyslexia* OR dyslexic* OR dysl* OR learning difficulty OR reading disability OR reading disorder OR specific learning difficulties OR specific reading disabilities)

Source: UK National Newspapers

Project ID: None

1 of 2 DOCUMENTS

The Guardian (London)

December 15, 1984

Scanning declared safe for pregnant women / Report on ultra-sound scans from Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologisits

BYLINE: By ANDREW VEITCH, Medical Correspondent

LENGTH: 536 words

Ultra-sound scans for pregnant women are given a clean bill of health in a report from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists published yesterday.

But the junior health minister, Mr John Patten, refused to revoke his instruction to health authorities, that scans should not be routinely performed on all mothers.

The college's investigation and Mr Patten's instruction followed alarm over findings in the United States and elsewhere that ultra-sound can damage rat foetuses, the genetic material in mouse cells, and might be associated with **dyslexia** in children.

The college working party, headed by Professor Stuart Campbell, of King's College Hospital, London, concludes: 'We believe that the evidence for the safety of ultra-sound is sufficiently convincing for us not to recommend a change in the common practice of routine ultra-sound examination in pregnancy.'

But the specialists admit that there is a serious lack of evidence that routine scanning, as opposed to selective scans on mothers thought to be at risk, reduces death and handicap among babies, or illness among mothers.

They warn that mothers should not be persuaded to have the examination against their will, hospitals should explain in ante-natal booklets why the procedure is recommended,

and doctors and technicians should ensure that mothers have read and understood the explanation before performing the examination.

'Commercial exploitation of ante-natal scanning by poorly trained personnel merely to let parents see the baby is to be deplored,' the report says.

Ultra-sound machines in hospitals should be checked by an agency such as the National Physical Laboratory to ensure that foetuses are exposed to the minimum amount of sound, and there should be a national standard for the intensity of the beam.

Doctors and technicians should receive more training in how to use the machines and husbands or close relatives should be allowed to see the screen during scans. If any abnormality is found it should be the obstetrician who tells the mother.

At least 85 per cent of pregnant women in England have an ultra-sound scan, the investigation has found, and 122 of the 191 health districts offer routine scans to all mothers. Another 42 offer routine scans to a proportion of mothers because of differences of opinion between consultants.

Scans should be used between the 16th and 18th week of pregnancy, says the report, to investigate bleeding, pain, or vomiting; estimate the age and likely delivery date of the baby; identify twins; diagnose abnormalities and the position of the baby in the womb, and to diagnose placenta praevia - the condition which can cause a massive haemorrhage, endangering the mother's life.

But the Department of Health said that Mr Patten would stand by his decision, at least until the report on safety commissioned from the Medical Research Council is completed next year.

Mrs Beverly Beech, of the Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services (Aims), which has been campaigning against routine scans because of the fears over safety, said: 'Mr Patten is acting in the best interests of mothers and babies, and we support him.'

LOAD-DATE: June 13, 2000

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

The Guardian (London)

November 13, 1984

Special Report on Independent Schools: Looking after number one / Catering for different classroom capabilities

BYLINE: By JACK CROSS

LENGTH: 1444 words

As the maintained sector moved towards comprehensiveness, the independent schools went in for rigorous selectivity. Curriculums have been revolutionised, with classical studies fading and career-orientated courses gaining ground. In 1983 the five most popular destinations for boy leavers were higher education and training in engineering, economics and business studies, science, agriculture and medicine. The equivalents for girls were language, science, secretarial work, 'art etc,' and business studies.

The schools' raison d'etre hasn't changed; the forms the function of leadership have. Besides, the contemporary cold winds of recession and unemployment can chill anyone; in return for their pounds 4,000 to pounds 10,000 a year, modern parents look to provide shelter for their children in the shape of qualifications and careers.

The old establishments perform very well in their new roles. So it might be said, they should. With carefully selected intakes, complete parental backing, small classes and good teachers, it's not easy to go wrong. It ought to be said, though, that they have also become infinitely more interesting, innovative, realistic and caring places; it is a privilege, in more ways than one, to be taught in one of them. And if considered purely as machines for getting people into university - particularly Oxford and Cambridge - they work; independent schools fill the top places in any league table of percentage of entry successes.

Some insiders think this switch of emphasis may have gone too far. John Rae, of Westminster School, once wrote, 'The new academic ethos has its dangers . . . there is a danger that public school headmasters may become too much men of the market rather

than men of conviction . . . nor do we want to give our pupils the impression that good A level results are the be all and end all of the education we offer.'

Other headmasters say that this new competitive meritocratic image is itself a misleading stereotype, applicable only to a handful of top schools represented at the Head Masters' Conference. They are not referring to the existence of a considerable group of progressive schools but to what is probably a majority of outwardly conventional institutions which occupy a kind of middle ground.

After all, it doesn't take much common sense to see that simply because someone can afford to pay for his or her children's education, they are not all natural high-flyers, destined to whizz through schooling into university without a struggle. Many will be capable but not brilliant; others will have **learning difficulties** or special subject needs. There have to be schools to cater for them.

Probably the most identifiable group of these is composed of the 52 schools whose heads are members of the Society of Head Masters of Independent Schools - called with difficulty, SHMIS. It would be wrong to call the following four institutions representative - they are proud of their individuality - but their heads concede that SHMIS schools share certain, often indefinable, characteristics.

Never in its long history - it was founded in the 13th century - can the Cathedral School at Wells, in Somerset, have seen any changes to compare with those which took place in 1970, when it went co-educational. While other public schools were tentatively introducing girls into their sixth forms, the Cathedral School started at the bottom. Now 45 per cent of its pupils are girls. All teaching (even games, where it is appropriate) is co-educational; boys may take GCE Food and Nutrition and girls have the free run of the whole curriculum.

Again unlike most other public schools, it accepts most of its pupils at the age of 11, as the Direct Grant schools used to do. There is no streaming in the lower forms and common courses in basic subjects through the fifth. They teach Nuffield physics and SMP modern mathematics (both schemes pioneered in the independent sector), craft, design and technology, cookery and computer studies. Weaker candidates are encouraged to aim for CSEs as well as, or instead of, GCE O levels.

Acting Head Tony Millard has no hesitation in defining what gives his school its distinctive ambience. 'It's a combinatoon of co-education and music.' Almost one third of the 498 pupils are skilled instrumentalists who gained admission through their performances at audition. Many of them are supported by DES scholarships, local authority sponsorships or educational charities. In addition, Millard declares an unusual interest in TVEI, Education for Capability, and similar work-associated schemes. Next January the whole lower sixth will be going out on work experience,' . . . and it won't be in the managers offices.'

Pupils enter Stanbridge Earls School, in Romsey, Hampshire, at the orthodox age of 13, most sit the Common Entrance Examination, though the marks obtained in it are no decisive. The prospectus claims the school is particularly suitable for 'Pupils showing some

promise of intellectual or physical ability or strength of character who would be unable to withstand the pressures of a large school, but who would flourish in a small and intimate one.' While emphasising that they welcome young people whose intellectual development has been held up by poor health, misfortune, inadequate schooling or late development, they insist that Stanbridge is not a school for the handicapped or maladjusted.

The emphasis is on individual programmes of tuition and chose pastoral care. Smallness is considered a virtue (there are only 170 pupils, both boys and girls); headmaster Howard Moxon says, 'It means I know each child well - it's a big bonus.'

A considerable proportion of the pupils need remedial help, a lot suffer from what is called faute de mieux, **dyslexia.** A favourable staffing ratio (1:8) and a great deal of trained assistance helps them to achieve the school's minimum aim of five O levels and most of the boys and girls go on, sometimes after resits, to study for A level and entry into higher or further education.

On the face of it, Royal Russell School, Croydon, seems conventional, though it has boys and girls, both as day pupils and boarders. Mr RD Balaam says, 'We aim for a broad academic entry and work is our first priority'. Nevertheless, they are involved with issues which are normally associated only with maintained schools. Last year, for example, as well as 450 O level passes, there were 120 at CSE - 'after a debate in which the parents took part.' The headmaster says he is looking forward to seeing how the new 16-plus CCSE is going to work out.

A sensible target for many of his pupils, he feels, is five or six O levels and enough A levels to get into higher education. About half of the leavers take this route, a good proportion of them going into polytechnics or colleges. 'Parents are suitably informed and are prepared to be realistic.' The rest seek employment at 16 , after advice and counselling from a full-time (women) careers teacher.

Bentham Grammar School, Lancaster, has been fully co-educational since before the war; the teaching of boys and girls in equal numbers is one of its strongest traditions. They aim for, and get a very comprehensive intake. Robert Repper, the headmaster, believes that a few of his students will obtain a hatful of A levels, some will need retakes to pass one or two, '. . and I'm pretty sure we've got a potential Oxford scholar coming through.' The curriculum is orthodox enough though for a small school (it has 300 pupils) they are proud to offer a wide range of options.

The school's position on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales, not far from Ingleborough, help to account for the popularity of geology, and for the fact that leisure activities include pot-holing, climbing, fell-walking, cave-rescue, and other occupations associated with the Outward Bound movement.

All the SHMIS schools are different; Seaford College, in West Sussex, has its own beef herd, for instance. Nevertheless they, and others in the independent sector, have much in common. They tend to be smallish, less competitively selective in their entrance

requirements, co-educational, very much concerned with providing individualised routes leading to a wide range of post-school objectives. All the heads roundly resist their schools being labelled second division establishments. They fit neither the old, spartan, character-building stereotype, nor the new meritocratic one. Each, in its own way, does its best to meet the requirements of the full range of ordinary children. If they didn't charge fees they might be called comprehensives.

LOAD-DATE: June 13, 2000

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

Appendix 5: Original tree nodes (before coding data) generated in NVivo

Coding Structure
Grammatical Categories
Adjectives
Other Noun
Other Proper Nouns
Brand Names
Places
School Names
Pronoun
Title
Verbs
Other
Excluded
Negative Keywords
Themes
In Thesis
Discourse
Deficit Discourse
Empowering Discourse
Experts
Lack of literacy discourse
Male Dominance
School as a site of failure
Celebrity Discourse

Suing of education system
Topics
Crime and Law
Education
Education Settings
LEA
ICT
Literacy
Medical and Health
People
Politics
SEN and disability

Appendix 6: Final structure of tree nodes after coding (generated in NVivo)

Coding Structure
Grammatical Categories
Adjectives
Adverbs
Other Noun
Other Proper Nouns
Brand Names
Places
School Names
Pronoun
Title
Verbs
Other
Excluded
Negative Keywords
Themes
Emerging
Cures
Dyslexia jokes
Gift of dyslexia
Research
In Thesis
Discourse
Deficit Discourse
Empowering Discourse
Experts
Lack of literacy discourse

Male Dominance
School as a site of failure
Celebrity Discourse
Suing of education system
Topics
Arts
Charity
Crime and Law
Education
Education Settings
LEA
Exams
Intelligence
Film and TV
Finance
ICT
Literacy
Media and social media
Medical and Health
Obituary
People
Politics
SEN and disability
Social Care
Sport

Appendix 7: Steps of Foucauldian Discourse analysis with analysis example

This analytic framework has been informed by the work of G. Rose (2001) and guided by the work of (Foucault, 1965, 1972a, 1973).

Table 31: Framework and example of how FDA was used in this study. Example is from the cures and treatments theme

Step in framework by Rose (2001)	Questions	Example from analysis (cures and treatments)	Comments
1 Acknowledge preconceptions and forget them	What pre-existing categories have been created? Have any assumptions been made?	Medical/health, SEN No Building the corpus allowed me to gain an understanding of the types of discourse within the texts. During the keyword analysis, the keywords were each read in the original texts in order to code them and identify themes and categories.	Cures and treatments of dyslexia was an emerging theme and thus unexpected at the beginning of the research.
2 Be familiar with the texts in order to identify key themes	How have I made myself familiar with the texts associated with the theme under investigation?		A table was created summarising all the cures and treatments found in the keyword analysis.
3 Identify key themes in a top-down manner and be open to the unexpected	What key themes have been identified? What discourses are drawn upon in the texts/across the themes?	Cures and treatments. Medical, scientific	

4		Are there any inconsistencies within/across the texts? What truths are the authors claiming? Are the authors claiming truth?	Some of the cures and treatments were followed up and disputed in later news reports. Others were not despite the fact that all of them are untrue - dyslexia cannot be cured. The authors are claiming that dyslexia is curable or treatable with supplements or visual aids Yes. The articles are claiming that dyslexia has been cured.	
	Examine the effects of truth.	Are the authors in a powerful position to claim truth?	Through words like scientific, research - the authors are positioning themselves in a powerful position. Scientific research has powerful position in society.	Foucault discusses the link between science and knowledge in Archaeology of Knowledge arguing that there is a 'hierarchical order of power associated with science' (Foucault, 1980, p. 85)
5	Examine the complexity and contradictions offered with differing discourses. This includes being aware of 'interpretive repertoire' (Potter, 1996, p. 131)	Is there evidence of interpretive repertoire? (Mini-discourses) What contradictions (if any) are present?	Yes. There is evidence of scientific discourse being used to position the cures and treatments as truth. Yes. Academic research contradicts the claims made in these news items.	
6	Examine invisible discourses – who is producing the discourse and who is absent?	Who is producing the discourse?	The companies behind the cures, researchers, newspapers themselves.	

	Who is absent from the discourse?	The 'cured' children	The children are only mentioned via the parent and in very few articles.
	Are voices directly or indirectly quoted?	The researchers involved in developing the cures and the companies such as DDAT are quoted directly and indirectly.	
7	What is the genre of the text?	News	
Pay attention to detail	Is the text interrelated with other texts?	Yes, there are several reports across the different newspapers reporting the same cures. There is also some follow up reports on DDAT which reports that they have been discredited/gone bust.	

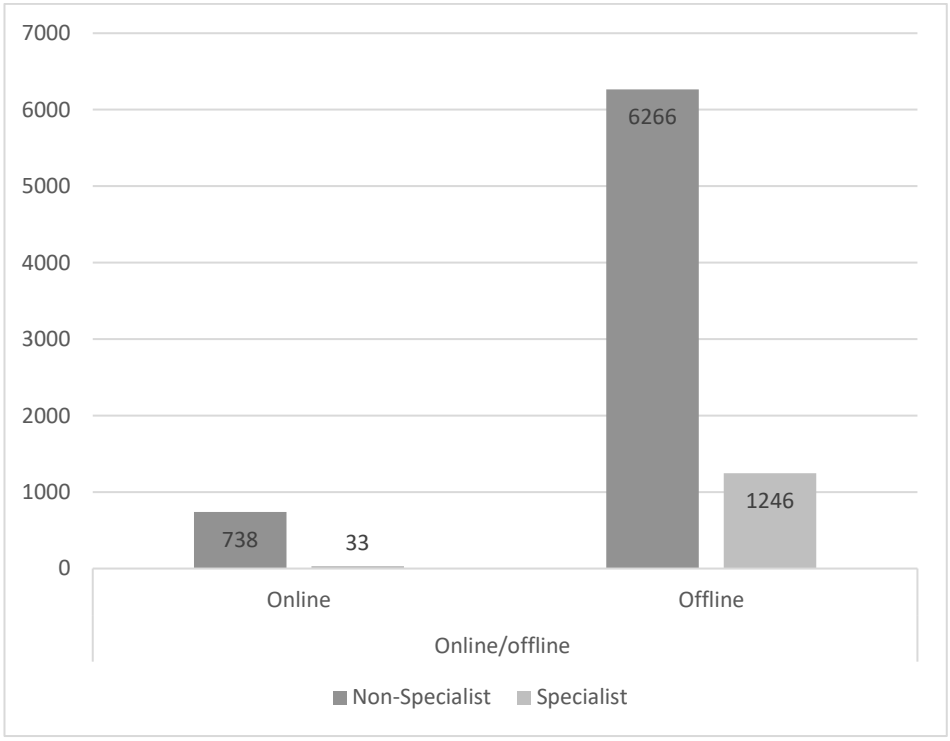
Appendix 8: Summary of the stages of the research process

This appendix provides a brief summary of the stages involved in this research project. The list below was informed by the work of Baker et al. (2008, p. 295)

1. Context based analysis of dyslexia and the dyslexic subject. Review of the literature.
2. Establish research questions and corpus building procedures
3. Search in LexisNexis for newspaper articles concerning dyslexia
4. Create a map of the data including missing data
5. First stage screening of the data using headlines
6. Second stage screening of the data using keywords
7. Third stage screening of the data using the full article
8. Building of the corpora and sub-corpora including planning a storage system and corpus annotation
9. Corpus analysis of frequencies, keywords, concordance, collocation
10. Analysis of texts using FDA framework

Appendix 9: Offline and online news items in the corpora.

Figure 19: Offline and online news items in the corpora



Appendix 10: Top 50 keywords for SMC and NSMC corpora

Table 32: Top 50 keywords in the SMC corpus

	Keyword	Raw frequency	Normalised frequency (per 100,000 words)	Keyness (log-likelihood)
1	PUPILS	2,167	242.19	4,846.09
2	EDUCATION	2,844	317.85	4,160.78
3	STUDENTS	1,887	210.90	3,771.16
4	SCHOOLS	2,381	266.11	3,634.19
5	TEACHERS	1,985	221.85	3,400.25
6	CHILDREN	4,333	484.27	3,191.23
7	LEARNING	2,031	226.99	2,783.56
8	DYSLEXIA	3,799	424.59	2,700.89
9	TEACHING	1,164	130.09	2,028.54
10	NEEDS	1,470	164.29	1,988.59
11	SUPPORT	1,331	148.76	1,828.23
12	DIFFICULTIES	1,161	129.76	1,615.40
13	EDUCATIONAL	930	103.94	1,452.89
14	SPECIAL	1,359	151.89	1,437.76
15	LITERACY	638	71.30	1,263.47
16	READING	1,588	177.48	1,214.45
17	SKILLS	908	101.48	1,193.55
18	UNIVERSITY	1,325	148.09	1,156.57
19	PRIMARY	701	78.35	1,126.52
20	COLLEGE	1,003	112.10	1,109.08
21	SEN	253	28.28	906.99
22	PER	1,055	117.91	878.95
23	RESEARCH	754	84.27	741.59
24	TES	174	19.45	731.85
25	SECONDARY	414	46.27	670.83
26	CURRICULUM	331	36.99	670.44
27	COURSES	360	40.23	663.21
28	SPELLING	582	65.05	640.39
29	LEVEL	653	72.98	615.17
30	MATHS	440	49.18	609.82
31	LANGUAGE	623	69.63	603.71
32	ASSESSMENT	362	40.46	593.78
33	CLASSROOM	361	40.35	587.97
34	HIGHER	405	45.26	586.44
35	SPECIFIC	337	37.66	574.78

36	GCSE	322	35.99	532.25
37	ACADEMIC	447	49.96	528.60
38	EXAM	342	38.22	521.54
39	PROFESSOR	441	49.29	520.00
40	RESULTS	472	52.75	514.91
41	TRAINING	596	66.61	490.54
42	SYSTEM	639	71.42	486.93
43	PROVISION	261	29.17	477.98
44	PHONICS	208	23.25	473.52
45	INCLUSION	177	19.78	473.35
46	DISABILITY	436	48.73	455.33
47	INDEPENDENT	418	46.72	444.61
48	RESOURCES	262	29.28	436.97
49	REPORT	435	48.62	436.28
50	STRATEGIES	187	20.90	431.23

Table 33: Top 50 keywords in the NSMC corpus

	Keyword	Raw frequency	Normalised frequency (per 100,000 words)	Keyness (log-likelihood)
1	MAN	5,014	72.68	667.33
2	LOVE	4,589	66.52	445.31
3	WIFE	2,867	41.56	429.47
4	HE'S	4,643	67.30	397.71
5	FATHER	4,389	63.62	396.93
6	FILM	3,333	48.31	349.87
7	MARRIED	1,961	28.43	336.43
8	DIED	1,997	28.95	296.53
9	NIGHT	2,880	41.75	285.42
10	HIMSELF	3,133	45.41	284.58
11	STAR	2,258	32.73	256.53
12	SHE'S	2,604	37.75	248.57
13	DAD	1,863	27.00	232.71
14	CAR	1,883	27.29	230.15
15	MARRIAGE	1,345	19.50	223.31
16	DEATH	1,886	27.34	218.16
17	POLICE	2,049	29.70	216.86
18	WOMAN	1,991	28.86	208.84
19	MOVIE	956	13.86	186.25
20	TV	2,471	35.82	183.73
21	HUSBAND	1,656	24.00	182.99
22	BORN	2,312	33.51	174.82
23	FRIEND	1,964	28.47	168.02
24	BOUGHT	1,208	17.51	165.54
25	HOLLYWOOD	909	13.18	159.50
26	PARTY	1,821	26.40	152.89
27	ACTOR	1,363	19.76	150.73
28	BABY	1,173	17.00	148.00
29	WEDDING	601	8.71	146.58
30	GUY	1,079	15.64	146.22
31	BROTHER	1,628	23.60	138.53
32	SISTER	1,350	19.57	131.64
33	SOLD	1,003	14.54	130.72
34	GIRLFRIEND	576	8.35	130.10
35	BLACK	1,935	28.05	129.02
36	ACTRESS	1,068	15.48	124.09
37	CANCER	984	14.26	123.52
38	PRINCE	756	10.96	121.04

39	LIVED	1,167	16.92	119.63
40	BEAUTIFUL	1,046	15.16	116.84
41	FANS	578	8.38	116.38
42	I'LL	1,222	17.71	116.36
43	COUPLE	1,680	24.35	114.77
44	PLAYED	1,419	20.57	112.31
45	HOTEL	951	13.78	110.63
46	DRINK	798	11.57	110.06
47	CELEBRITY	759	11.00	109.43
48	BED	1,008	14.61	106.76
49	BLOOD	739	10.71	105.24
50	OH	1,073	15.55	102.49

Appendix 11: Keywords by theme in the NSMC and SMC

Table 34: Keywords by theme

Theme	Keywords in SMC	Keywords in the NSMC
Celebrity/Showbiz		Film, star, movie, TV, Hollywood, Actor, Guy, actress, celebrity, prince, fans, played, drink
Crime		police
Education	Pupils, education, system, students, teachers, children, learning, teaching, curriculum, courses, assessment, classroom, GCSE, exam, level, maths, professor, results, training, independent, report, University, primary, college, secondary, higher,	
Education Settings	schools	
Female		wife, she's, woman, sister, girlfriend
Health		blood, cancer
Life events		married, died, marriage, death, born, wedding, baby
Literacy	Literacy, reading, spelling, language, phonics, skills	
Location		hotel
Male		Man, he's, father, himself, dad, husband, brother
Other	TES, academic	oh, I'll
Other adjective		black, lived, beautiful
Other noun		car, friend, bed, love
Other verb		bought, sold
Politics		party
SEN/Dyslexia	Dyslexia, needs, support, difficulties, special, educational, SEN, inclusion, disability, per [cent], research, specific, provision, resources, strategies	
Time		couple, night

Appendix 12: Collocates of the search term dyslexia in the NSMC

Table 35: Collocates of the search term dyslexia in the NSMC

ID	Position	Collocate	Stat (MI)	Freq coll	Freq corpus
1	R	children	5.423	390	4328
2	R	students	5.319	158	1885
3	R	pupils	5.316	181	2163
4	L	who	4.591	166	3280
5	L	was	4.407	277	6219
6	L	are	4.338	268	6308
7	L	as	4.299	240	5807
8	R	not	4.199	155	4018
9	L	is	4.04	378	10944
10	L	be	3.916	178	5615
11	L	that	3.821	288	9703
12	R	I	3.811	226	7669
13	L	for	3.779	290	10060
14	L	he	3.762	134	4703
15	R	have	3.444	123	5380
16	L	a	3.43	481	21253
17	R	with	3.386	174	7926
18	L	to	3.32	565	26949
19	R	they	3.308	104	5001
20	R	and	3.29	491	23903
21	L	of	3.168	424	22465
22	R	in	3.097	293	16308

Appendix 13: Collocates of the search term dyslexia in the SMC

Table 36: Collocates of the search term dyslexia in the SMC

ID	Position	Collocate	Stat (MI)	Freq coll	Freq corpus
1	L	British	7.254	223	357
2	R	association	7.108	231	409
3	R	institute	7.01	134	254
4	L	difficulties	5.071	159	1156
5	L	such	4.803	137	1199
6	L	with	4.615	795	7926
7	L	learning	4.37	170	2009
8	L	people	4.121	110	1544
9	L	as	3.999	380	5807
10	R	said	3.986	126	1943
11	R	has	3.959	237	3724
12	M	dyslexia	3.94	232	3692
13	L	about	3.94	144	2292
14	L	from	3.934	230	3677
15	R	is	3.848	645	10944
16	R	or	3.831	185	3175
17	R	by	3.779	224	3986
18	L	children	3.754	239	4328
19	R	not	3.702	214	4018
20	R	which	3.644	123	2403
21	L	that	3.625	490	9703
22	L	have	3.6	267	5380
23	L	of	3.547	1075	22465
24	L	who	3.529	155	3280
25	L	had	3.525	122	2589

26	L	his	3.522	136	2892
27	L	for	3.519	472	10060
28	R	can	3.48	129	2824
29	R	was	3.454	279	6219
30	R	says	3.425	108	2456
31	R	a	3.377	904	21253
32	L	the	3.345	1779	42781
33	R	be	3.342	233	5615
34	L	on	3.315	230	5645
35	R	and	3.289	956	23903
36	L	her	3.255	101	2584
37	R	at	3.204	236	6255
38	R	in	3.104	574	16308
39	L	to	3.062	921	26949
40	R	he	3.046	159	4703
41	R	are	3.038	212	6308
42	L	education	3.015	100	3022

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